Tyrannick Love;

OR, THE

Royal Martyr.

A

TRAGEDY.

As it is Acted by His Majestie's Servants at the

THEATRE ROYAL.

By JOHN DRYDEN, Servant to His Majesty.

Non jam prima peto——neq; vincere certo;
Extremum rediisse pudet.—— Virg.

LONDON,

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TO THE

Most Illustrious Prince,

JAMES,

Duke of Monmouth and Buccleugh,

One of His Majestie's most Honourable Privy Council, and Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter, &c.

SIR,

THE favourable Reception which your Excellent Lady afforded to one of my former Plays, has encouraged me to double my Presumption, in addressing this to your Grace's Patronage. So dangerous a thing it is to admit a Poet into your Family, that you can never afterwards be free from the chiming of ill Verses, perpetually sounding in your Ears, and more troublesom than the Neighbourhood of Steeples. I have been favourable to my self in this expression; a zealous Fanatick would have gone farther, and have called me the Serpent, who first presented the fruit of my Poetry to the Wife, and so gain'd the opportunity to seduce the Husband. Yet I am ready to avow a Crime so advantageous to me; but the World, which will condemn my boldness, I am sure will justifie and applaud my choice. All men will join with me in the Adoration which I pay you, they would wish only I had brought you a more noble Sacrifice. Instead of an Heroic Play, you might justly expect an Heroic

Poem, filled with the past Glories of your Ancestors, and the future certainties of your own. Heaven has already taken care to form you for an Heroe. You have all the Advantages of mind and body, and an Illustrious Birth, conspiring to render you an extraordinary Person. The *Achilles* and *Rinaldo* are present in you, even above their Originals; you only want a *Homer*, or a *Tasso*, to make you equal to them. Youth, Beauty and Courage, all which you possess in the height of their perfection, are the most desirable guifts of Heaven: and Heaven is never prodigal of such Treasures but to some uncommon purpose. So goodly a Fabrick was never framed by an Almighty Architect for a Vulgar Guest. He shew'd the value which he set upon your Mind, when he took care to have it so nobly and so beautifully lodg'd. To a graceful fashion and deportment of Body, you have joyned a winning Conversation, and an easie Greatness, derived to you from the best, and best beloved of Princes. And with a great power of Obliging, the World has observed in you a desire to oblige, even beyond your power. This, and all that I can say on so excellent and large a subject, is only History, in which Fiction has no part; I can employ nothing of Poetry in it, any more than I do in that humble Protestation which I make, to continue ever.

Your Grace's most obedient,
and most devoted Servant,

A *John Dryden.*

PREFACE.

I Was mov'd to write this Play by many Reasons: amongst others, the Commands of some Persons of Honour, for whom I have a most particular respect, were daily sounding in my ears, that it would be of good example to undertake a Poem of this Nature. Neither were my own inclinations wanting to second their desires. I consider'd that pleasure was not the only end of Poesie; and that even the instructions of Morality were not so wholly the business of a Poet, as that the Precepts and Examples of Piety were to be omitted. For to leave that employment altogether to the Clergy, were to forget that Religion was first taught in Verse: (which the laziness or dulness of succeeding Priesthood, turn'd afterwards into Prose.) And it were also to grant, (which I never shall) that representations of this kind may not as well be conducing to Holiness, as to good Manners. Yet, far be it from me, to compare the use of Dramatique Poesie with that of Divinity: I only maintain, against the Enemies of the Stage, that patterns of Piety, decently represented, and equally remov'd from the extremes of Superstition and Prophaneness, may be of excellent use to second the Precepts of our Religion. By the Harmony of Words, we elevate the Mind to a sense of Devotion, as our solemn Musick, which is inarticulate Poesie, does in Churches. And by the lively Images of Piety, adorn'd by action, through the senses, allure the Soul: which, while it is charmed in a silent joy of what it sees and hears, is struck at the same time with a secret veneration of things Cœlestial; and is wound up insensibly into the practice of that which it admires. Now, if, instead of this, we sometimes see on our Theatres, the Examples of Vice rewarded, or at least unpunished, yet it ought not to be an Argument against the Art, any more than the Extravagances and Impieties of the Pulpit in the late times of Rebellion, can be against the Office and Dignity of the Clergy.

But many times it happens, that Poets are wrongfully accus'd, as it is my own Case in this very Play, where I am charg'd by some ignorant or malicious Persons, with no less Crimes than Prophaneness and Irreligion.

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The Part of Maximin, *against which these holy Criticks so much declaim, was designed by me to set off the Character of St.* Catharine. *And those who read the* Roman *History, may easily remember, that* Maximin *was not only a bloody Tyrant,* vastus corpore, animo ferus, *as* Herodian *describes him; but also a Persecuter of the Church, against which he raised the sixth Persecution. So that what soever he speaks or acts in this Tragedy, is no more than a Record of his Life and Manners; a Picture, as near as I could take it, from the Original. If with much pains and some success, I have drawn a deform'd Piece, there is as much of Art, and as near an imitation of Nature, in a* Lazare, *as in a* Venus. Maximin *was an Heathen, and what he speaks against Religion, is in contempt of that which he profess'd. He defies the Gods of* Rome, *which is no more than St.* Catharine *might with decency have done. If it be urged, that a person of such Principles, who scoffs at any Religion, ought not to be presented on the Stage, why then are the Lives and Sayings of so many wicked and prophane persons recorded in the Holy Scriptures? I know it will be answer'd, That a due use may be made of them; that they are remembred with a Brand of Infamy fixt upon them; and set as Sea-marks for those who behold them, to avoid. And what other use have I made of* Maximin? *Have I proposed him as a pattern to be imitated, whom, even for his impiety to his false Gods, I have so severely punish'd? Nay, as if I had foreseen this Objection, I purposely remov'd the Scene of the Play, which ought to have been at* Alexandria *in* Egypt, (*where St.* Catharine *suffer'd*) *and laid it under the Walls of* Aquileia *in* Italy, *where* Maximin *was slain: that the punishment of his Crime might immediately succeed its Execution.*

This, Reader, is what I ow'd to my just defence, and the due reverence of that Religion which I profess, to which all Men, who desire to be esteemed good or honest, are obliged: I have neither leisure nor occasion to write more largely on this Subject, because I am already justified by the sentence of the best, and most discerning Prince in the World, by the suffrage of all unbyass'd Judges; and, above all, by the Witness of my own Conscience, which abhors the thought of such a Crime; to which I ask leave to add my outward Conversation, which shall never be justly tax'd with the Note of Atheism or Prophaneness.

In what else concerns the Play, I shall be brief: for the faults of

the

the Writing and Contrivance, I leave them to the mercy of the Reader, for I am as little apt to defend my own Errors, as to find those of other Poets: Only I observe, that the great Censors of Wit and Poetry, either produce nothing of their own, or what is more ridiculous than any thing they reprehend. Much of ill Nature, and a very little Judgment, go far in finding the mistakes of Writers.

I pretend not that any thing of mine can be correct: This Poem, especially, which was contrived and written in seven Weeks, though afterwards hindred by many Accidents, from a speedy Representation, which would have been its just excuse.

Yet the Scenes are every where unbroken, and the unities of place and time more exactly kept, than perhaps is requisite in a Tragedy; or at least, than I have since preserv'd them in the Conquest of Granada.

I have not every where observ'd the equality of Numbers in my Verse, partly by reason of my haste; but more especially, because I would not have my Sense a Slave to Syllables.

'Tis easie to discover that I have been very bold in my alterations of the Story, which of it self was too barren for a Play; and that I have taken from the Church two Martyrs, in the persons of Porphyrius and the Empress, who suffer'd for the Christian Faith, under the Tyranny of Maximin.

I have seen a French Play called the Martyrdom of St. Catharine: but those who have read it, will soon clear me from stealing but of so dull an Author. I have only borrow'd a mistake from him, of one Maximin for another; for finding him in the French Poet, call'd the Son of a Thracian Herdsman, and an Alane Woman, I too easily believ'd him to have been the same Maximin mention'd in Herodian; till afterwards, consulting Eusebius and Metaphrastes, I found the Frenchman had betray'd me into an Error (when it was too late to alter it) by mistaking that first Maximin for a second, the Contemporary of Constantine the Great, and one of the Usurpers of the Eastern Empire.

But neither was the other Name of my Play more fortunate; for as some, who had heard of a Tragedy of St. Catharine, imagin'd I had taken my Plot from thence; so others, who had heard of another Play, called L'Amour Tyrannique, with the same ignorance, accus'd me to have borrow'd my design from it, because I have accidentally given my Play the same Title, not having to this day seen it;

and

and knowing only I suppose, that such a Comedy is extant in French, under the Name of Monsieur Scudery.

As for what I have said of Astral or Aerial Spirits, it is no Invention of mine, but taken from those who have written on that Subject. Whether there are such Beings or not, it concerns not me; 'tis sufficient for my purpose, that many have believ'd the affirmative; and that these Heroick Representations, which are of the same Nature with the Epick, are not limited, but walk the extremest bounds of what is credible.

For the little Criticks, who plead themselves with thinking they have found a flaw in that line of the Prologue, (And he who servilely creeps after Sense, is safe, *&c.*) *as if I Patroniz'd my own Nonsence, I may reasonably suppose they have never read* Horace, Serpit humi tutus, *&c. are his words: He who creeps after plain, dull, common Sense, is safe from committing Absurdities, but can never reach any heighth, or excellence of Wit; and sure I could not mean that any excellence were to be found in Nonsence. With the same ignorance, or malice, they would accuse me for using* empty Arms, *when I writ of a Ghost or Shadow: which has only the appearance of a Body or Limbs, and is empty or void of flesh and blood; and* vacuis amplectitur ulnis, *was an Expression of* Ovid's *on the same Subject. Some Fool before them, had charg'd me in the* Indian Emperor *with Nonsence, in these words,* And follow Fate which does too fast pursue; *which was borrow'd from* Virgil *in the* 12th *of his Æneids,* Eludit gyro interior, sequiturque sequentem. *I quote not these to prove that I never writ Nonsence, but only to shew that they are so unfortunate as not to have found it.*

VALE.

Prologue.

PROLOGUE.

SELF-Love (which never rightly underſtood)
Makes Poets ſtill conclude their Plays are good:
And malice in all Criticks reigns ſo high,
That for ſmall Errours, they whole Plays decry;
So that to ſee this fondneſs, and that ſpite,
You'd think that none but mad men judge or write.
Therefore our Poet, as he thinks not fit
T'impoſe upon you what he writes for Wit,
So hopes that leaving you your cenſures free,
You equal Judges of the whole will be:
They judge but half who only faults will ſee.
Poets, like lovers, ſhould be bold and dare,
They ſpoil their buſineſs with an over-care:
And he who ſervilely creeps after ſenſe,
Is ſafe, but n'er will reach an Excellence.
Hence 'tis, our Poet in his conjuring,
Allow'd his Fancy the full ſcope and ſwing.
But when a Tyrant for his Theme he had,
He loos'd the reins and bid his Muſe run mad:
And though he ſtumbles in a full Career;
Yet Raſhneſs is a better fault than Fear.
He ſaw his way; but in ſo ſwift a Pace,
To chuſe the Ground, might be to loſe the Race.
They then who of each Trip th' advantage take,
Find but thoſe faults which they want Wit to make.

Persons Represented.

Maximin, *Tyrant of Rome,*	By	Major *Mohun.*
Porphyrius, *Captain of the Pretorian Bands,*		Mr. *Hart.*
Charinus, *The Emperor's Son,*		Mr. *Harris.*
Placidius, *a great Officer,*		Mr. *Kynaston.*
Valerius, *Tribunes of the Army,*		Mr. *Lydall.*
Albinus, *Tribunes of the Army,*		Mr. *Littlewood.*
Nigrinus, *a Tribune and Conjurer,*		Mr. *Beeston.*
Ameriel, *Guardian Angel to* S. Catharine,		Mr. *Bell.*
Apollonius, *a Heathen Philosopher,*		Mr. *Cartwright.*

Berenice, *Wife to* Maximin,	By	Mrs. *Marshall.*
Valeria, *Daughter to* Maximin,		Mrs. *Ellen Gwyn.*
S. Catharine, *Princess of* Alexandria,		Mrs. *Bowtell.*
Felicia, *her Mother,*		Mrs. *Knepp.*
Erotion, *Attendants,*		Mrs. *Uphill.*
Cydnon, *Attendants,*		Mrs. *Eastland.*

SCENE, *The Camp of* Maximin, under the Walls of *Aquileia.*

Tyrannick Love;

OR, THE

Royal Martyr.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Camp, or Pavilion-Royal.

Maximin, Charinus, Placidius, Albinus, Valerius, Apollonius, *Guards*,

Max. THUS far my Arms have with ſucceſs been crown'd;
And found no ſtop, or vanquiſh'd what they found.
The German Lakes my Legions have o're-paſt,
With all the Bars which Art or Nature caſt:
My Foes in watry Faſtneſſes inclos'd,
I fought, alone, to their whole War expos'd
Did firſt the Depth of trembling marſhes ſound,
And fix'd my Eagles in unfaithful Ground;
By force ſubmitted to the Roman ſway
Fierce Nations, and unknowing to obey:
And now, for my reward, ungrateful *Rome*,
For which I fought abroad, rebels at home.

Alb. Yet tis their fear which does this War maintain:
They cannot brook a Martial Monarch's Reign:
Your valour would too much their Sloth accuſe;
And therefore, like themſelves, they Princes chuſe.

Placid. Two, tame, gown'd Princes, who at ease debate
In lazy Chairs the business of the State:
Who reign but while the people they can please,
And only know the little Arts of Peace.
Clar. In Fields they dare not Fight where Honour calls;
But breath a faint defiance from their Walls,
The very noise of War their Souls does wound;
They quake, but hearing their own Trumpets sound.
Val. An easie Summons but for form they wait,
And to your fame will open wide the Gate.
Placid. I wish our Fame that swift success may find;
But Conquests, Sir, are easily designed:
However soft within themselves they are,
To you they will be valiant by despair;
For having once been guilty well they know
To a revengeful Prince they still are so.
Alb. 'Tis true, that since the Senate's Succours came,
They grow more bold.
Max. ——— That Senate's but a name;
Or they are Pageant Princes which they make;
That power they give away they would partake.
Two equal powers, two different ways will draw,
While each may check and give the other Law.
True, they secure Propriety and Peace;
But are not fit an Empire to encrease.
When they should aid their Prince, the Slaves dispute;
And fear success should make him absolute.
They let Foes conquer to secure the State,
And lend a Sword, whose edge themselves rebate.
Char. When to encrease the Gods you late are gone,
I'll swiftly chuse to dye, or reign alone:
But these half-Kings our Courage cannot fright;
The thrifty State will bargain e're they fight:
Give just so much for every Victory;
And rather lose a Fight, than over-buy.
Max. Since all delays are dangerous to War,
Your men, *Albinus*, for assault prepare:
Crispinus and *Menephilus*, I hear
Two Consulars, these *Aquilians* cheer;
By whom they may, if we protract the time,
Be taught the courage to defend their crime.
Placid. Put off th'assault but only for this day:
No loss can come by such a small delay.
Char. We are not sure to morrow will be ours:
Wars have, like Love, their favourable hours:

Let

Let us uſe all: for if we loſe one day,
That white one in the Crowd may ſlip away.
Max. Fates dark receſſes we can never find;
But fortune, at ſome hours, to all is kind;
The lucky have whole days, which ſtill they chooſe;
Th'unlucky have but hours, and thoſe they loſe.
Placid. I have conſulted one who reads Heav'ns doom,
And ſees, as preſent, things which are to come.
'Tis that *Nigrinus*, made by your Command
A Tribune in the new Panonian Band.
Him have I ſeen, (on *Ister's* Banks he ſtood,
Where laſt we winter'd) bind the head-long flood
In ſudden Ice; and where moſt ſwift it flows,
In Cryſtal nets, the wondring Fiſhes cloſe.
Then, with a moments Thaw, the ſtreams inlarge,
And from the meſh the twinckling Gueſts diſcharge.
In a deep Vale or near ſome ruin'd Wall,
He would the Ghoſts of ſlaughter'd Soldiers call;
Who flow, to wounden Bodys did repair,
And loath to enter, ſhiver'd in the air;
Theſe his dreadful Wand did to ſhort life compel,
And forc'd the Fates of Battle to foretel.
Max. 'Tis wond'rous ſtrange! But good *Placidius*, ſay,
What propheſies *Nigrinus* of this day?
Placid. In a lone Tent, all hung with black, I ſaw,
Where in a Square he did a Circle draw:
Four Angels, made by that Circumference,
Bore Holy words inſcrib'd, of myſtick ſenſe,
When firſt a hollow Wind began to blow,
The Skie grew black, and belli'd down more low,
Around the field did nimble Lightning Play,
Which offer'd us by fits, and ſnatch'd the day.
'Midſt this, was heard the ſhrill and tender cry
Of well-pleas'd Ghoſts, which in the ſtorm did fly;
Danc'd to and fro, and ſkim'd along the ground,
Till to the Magick Circle they were bound.
They courſing it, while we were fenc'd within,
We ſaw this dreadful Scene of Fate begin.
Char. Speak without fear; what did the viſion ſhew?
Placid. A Curtain drawn preſented to our view,
A Town beſieg'd and on the Neighbouring Plain.
Lay heaps of Viſionary Soldiers ſlain.
A riſing miſt obſcur'd the Gloomy head
Of one, who in Imperial Robes lay dead.
Near this, in Fetters, ſtood a Virgin crown'd;

Whom

Whom many *Cupids* ſtrove in vain to wound:
A voice to morrow, ſtill to morrow rung:
Another *Io*; *Io*, *Pæan*, ſung.
Char. Viſions and Oracles ſtill doubtful are,
And n'er expounded till th'event of War.
The Gods fore-knowledge on our Swords will wait:
If we fight well they muſt foreſhow good Fate.
[*To them a Centurion.*
Cent. A riſing duſt which troubles all the Air,
And this way travels, ſhows ſome Army near.
Char. I hear the ſound of Trumpets from afar. [*Exit Albinus.*
Max. It ſeems the voice of Triumph not of War.
[*To them* Albinus *again.*
Alb. Health and Succeſs our Emperour attends;
The Forces marching on the plain are Friends.
Porphyrius, whom you *Ægypt*'s Prætor made,
Is come from *Alexandria* to your aid.
Max. It well becomes the Conduct and the Care
Of one ſo fam'd and fortunate in War.
You muſt reſign *Placidius*, your command,
To him I promis'd the Prætorian Band.
Your Duty in your ſwift Compliance ſhow,
I will provide ſome other Charge for you.
Placid. May *Cæſar*'s pleaſure ever be obey'd,
With that ſubmiſſion which by me is paid.
Now all the Curſes Envy ever knew,
Or could invent, *Porphyrius* purſue. [*Aſide.*
Alb. Placidius does too tamely bear his loſs;
This new pretender will all power ingroſs:
All things muſt now by his Direction move;
And you, Sir, muſt reſign your Father's love.
Char. Yes; every name to his repute muſt bow;
There grow no Bays for any other Brow.
He blaſts my early Honour in the bud,
Like ſome tall Tree the Monſter of the Wood.
O'r ſhading all which under him would grow,
He ſheds his venom on the Plants below.
Alb. You muſt ſome noble action undertake;
Equal with his your own renown to make.
Char. I am not for a ſloathful envy born,
I'll do't this day, in the dire Viſions ſcorn.
He comes: We two, like the Twin-Stars appear;
Never to ſhine together in one Sphere. [*Exit cum* Alb.

Enter

Enter Porphyrius *attended.*

Max. Porphyrius, welcome, welcome as the light
To cheerful Birds; or as to Lovers, night.
Welcome as what thou bring'ſt me, Victory.
Per. That waits, Sir, on your Arms, and not on me.
You left a Conqueſt more than half atchiev'd,
And for whoſe cauſe I almoſt griev'd.
Yours only the *Ægyptian* Laurels are;
I bring you but the reliques of your War.
The Chriſtian Princeſs to receive your doom,
Is from her Conquer'd *Alexandria* come.
Her Mother in another Veſſel ſent,
A Storm ſurpriz'd; nor know I the event:
Both from your Bounty muſt receive their ſtate;
Or muſt on your Triumphant Chariot wait.
Max. From me they can expect no grace, whoſe minds
An execrable Superſtition Blinds.
Apoll. The Gods who rais'd you to the Worlds Command,
Require theſe Victims from your grateful Hand.
Por. To minds reſolv'd, the threats of Death are vain;
They run to fires, and there enjoy their pain:
Not *Mucius* made more haſt his hand t'expoſe
To greedy flames, than their whole Bodies thoſe.
Max. How, to their own deſtruction, they are blind!
Zeal is the Pious madneſs of the mind.
Por. They all our fam'd Philoſophers defie;
And would our Faith by force of reaſon try.
Apoll. I beg it, Sir, by all the Powers Divine,
That in their right this Combat may be mine.
Max. It ſhall and fifty Doctors of our Laws,
Be added to you to maintain the Cauſe.

Enter Berenice *the Empreſs*, Valeria *Daughter to the Emperour*, Erotion.

Placid. The Empreſs and your Daughter, Sir, are here.
Por. What dangers in theſe charming eyes appear?
[*Looking on the Empreſs.*
How my old wounds are open'd at this view?
And in my murd'rers preſence bleed anew?
Max. I did expect your coming to partake [*To the Ladies.*
The general gladneſs which my Triumphs make.
You did *Porphyrius* as a Courtier know,
But as a Conqueror behold him now.
Ber. You know (I read it in your bluſhing face) [*To Por.*

To

To merit, better than receive a Grace:
And I know better silently to owe,
Than with vain words to pay your service done.
Por. Princes, like Gods, reward e're we deserve;
[*Kneeling to kiss her Hand.*
And pay us in permitting us to serve.
Oh might I still grow here, and never move! [*lower.*
Ber. How dangerous are these Ecstasies of Love!
He shows his passion to a Thousand Eyes!
He cannot stir, nor can I bid him rise!
That word my heart refuses to my tongue! [*Aside.*
Max. Madam you let the General kneel too long.
Por. Too long as if Eternity were so! [*Aside.*
Ber. Rise, good *Porphyrius*, (since it must be so) [*Aside.*
Por. Like Hermits, from a Vision, I retire; [*Rising.*
With Eyes too Weak to see what I admire. [*Aside.*
Val. The Empress knows your worth; but, Sir, there be
[*To Porphyrius, who kisses her Hand.*
Those who can value it as high as she.
And 'tis but just (since in my Fathers cause,
You fought) your Valour should have my Applause.
Placid. O Jealousie, how art thou Eagle ey'd!
She loves; and would her Love in Praises hide:
How am I bound this Rival to pursue,
Who ravishes my Love and Fortune too! [*Aside.*
A dead March within, and Trumpets.
Max. Somewhat of mournful, sure, my Ears does sound;
Like the hoarse murmers of a Trumpets sound,
And Drums unbrac'd, with Soldiers broken cry.
Enter Albinus.
Albinus, whence proceeds this dismal noise?
Alb. Too soon you'll know what I want words to tell.
Max. How fares my Son? Is my *Charinus* well?
Not answer me! Oh my Prophetick fear!
Alb. How can I speak; or how, Sir, can you hear?
Imagine that which you would most deplore,
And that which I would speak, is it, or more?
Max. Thy mournful message in thy looks I read:
Is he (Oh that I live to ask it) dead?
Alb. Sir.——
Max. Stay; if thou speak'st that word, thou speak'st thy last:
Some God now, if he dares, relate what's past:
Say but he's dead, that God shall mortal be.
Alb. Then what I dare not speak, look back and see.
[*Charinus borne in dead by Soldiers.*
Max.

Max. See nothing, Eyes, henceforth but death and wo,
You've done me the worst office you can do:
You've shown me Destinies prepost'rous crime;
An unripe Fate, disclos'd the Nature's time.
Por. Allwage, great Prince, your passion, lest you show
There's somewhat in your Soul which Fate can bow.
Por. Fortune should by your greatness be controul'd;
Arm your great mind, and let her take no hold.
Max. To tame Philosophers teach Constancy;
There is no farther use of it in me.
Gods (but why name I you!
All that was worth a Pray'r to you, is gone:)
I ask not back my Vertue, but my Son.
Alb. His too great thirst of Fame his ruine brought,
Though, Sir, beyond all humane force he fought.
Placid. This was my Vision of this fatal day!
Alb. With a fierce haste he led our Troops the way;
While fiery showers of Sulphur on him rain'd;
Nor left he, till the Battlements he gain'd:
There with a Forrest of their Darts he strove;
And stood like *Capaneus* defying *Jove*.
With his broad Sword the boldest beating down,
While Fate grew pale lest he should win the Town,
And turn'd the Iron Leaves of its dark Book,
To make new dooms, or mend what it mistook;
Till sought by many Deaths, he sunk, though late,
And by his fall asserted doubtful Fate.
Valer. Oh my dear Brother! whom Heaven let us see,
And would not longer suffer him to be!
Max. And didst not thou a Death with Honour chuse, [*To* Alb.
But impudently liv'st to bring this News?
After his loss, how didst thou dare to breath?
——But thy base Ghost shall follow him in death.
A decimation I will strictly make
Of all who my *Charinus* did forsake.
And of each Legion, each Centurion
Shall die:——*Placidius*, see my pleasure done.
Por. Sir, you will lose by this severity
Your Soldiers hearts.
Max. ——Why, they take Pay to die.
Por. Then spare *Albinus* only.
Max. ——I consent
To leave his life to be his punishment.
Discharg'd from trust; branded with infamy,
Let him live on, till he ask leave to die.

Ber. Let me Petition for him.
Max. ——— I have said
And will not be intreated, but obey
But, Empress, whence does your compelling
Ber. You need not ask it, since my birth, you know,
The Race of *Antonin*'s was nam'd the Good;
I draw my pity from my Royal Blood.
Max. Still must I be upbraided with your Line?
I know you speak it in contempt of mine.
But your late Brother did not prize me less,
Because I could not boast of Images.
And the Gods own'd me more, when they decreed
A Thracian Shepherd should your Line succeed.
Ber. The God's! O do not name the Pow'rs Divine,
They never mingled their Decrees with thine.
My Brother gave me to thee for a Wife,
And for my Dowry thou didst take his Life.
Max. The Gods by many Victories have shown,
That they my merits and his death did own.
Ber. Yes: they have own'd it; witness this just day;
When they begin thy mischiefs to repay.
See the reward of all thy wicked care,
Before thee thy Succession ended there,
Yet but in part my Brothers Ghost is pleas'd:
Restless till all the groaning World be eas'd.
For me; no other happiness I own
Than to have born no Issue to thy Throne.
Max. Provoke my rage no farther, lest I be
Reveng'd at once upon the Gods and thee.
Por. aside.] What horrid tortures seize my lab'ring mind!
O, only excellent of all thy kind!
To hear thee threatned while I idle stand!
Heaven! was I born to fear a Tyrants hand?
Max. to Ber.] Hence from my sight—thy blood, if thou dost stay—
Ber. Tyrant! too well to that thou know'st the way. [*Going.*
Por. Let baser Souls from falling Fortunes fly:
I'll pay my duty to her though I die. [*Exit leading to her.*
Max. What made *Porphyrius* so officious he?
The action look'd as done in scorn of me.
Val. It did indeed some little freedom show;
But somewhat to his services you owe.
Max. Yet if I thought it his presumption were——
Placid. Perhaps he did not your displeasure hear.
Max. My anger was too loud, not to be heard.
Placid. I'm loath to think he did it not regard.
Max. How, not regard!

Val. Placidius, you foment
On too light grounds, my Father's discontent.
Put when an action does two faces wear,
'Tis Justice to believe what is most fair.
I think that knowing what respect there rests
for her late Brother in the Soldiers Breasts,
He went to serve the Camp for ; and design'd
Only to calm the tempest in their mind,
Lest some Sedition in the Camp should rise.

Max. I ever thought him loyal as he's wise.
Since therefore all the Gods their spite have shown,
To rob my Age of a Successive Throne;
And you who now remain,
The only issue of my former Bed,
In Empire cannot by your Sex succeed:
To bind *Porphyrius* firmly to the State,
I will this day my *Cæsar* him create:
And, Daughter, I will give you him for Wife.

Val. O day the best and happiest of my Life!

Placid. O day the most accurst I ever knew! [*Aside.*

Max. See to my Son perform'd each Funeral due;
Then to the toils of War we will return;
And make our Enemies our loses mourn. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Royal Camp,

Berenice, Porphyrius.

Ber. *Porphyrius*, you too far did tempt your Fate,
In owning her the Emperour does hate.
'Tis true, your Duty to me it became;
But praising that, I must your Conduct blame.

Por. Not to have own'd my zeal at such a time,
Were to sin higher than your Tyrant's crime.

Ber. 'Twas too much my disgrace t'accompany;
A silent wish had been enough for me.

Por. Wishes are aids, faint Servants may supply,

Who ask Heav'n for you what themselves deny.
Could I do less than my respect to pay,
Where I before had given my heart away?
Ber. You fail in that respect you seem to bear,
When You speak words unfit for me to hear.
Por. Yet you did once accept those vows I paid.
Ber. Those vows were then to *Berenice* made,
But cannot now be heard without a sin,
When offer'd to the Wife of *Maximin*.
Por. Has, then, the change of Fortune chang'd your Will
Ah! why are you not *Berenice* still?
To *Maximin* you once declared your hate,
Your Marriage was a Sacrifice to th'State:
Your Brother made it to secure his Throne,
Which this man made a step to mount it on.
Ber. Whatever *Maximin* has been, or is,
I am to bear since Heav'n has made me his.
For Wives who must themselves of pow'r devest,
When they love blindly, for their peace love best.
Por. If mutual love be vow'd when Faith you plight,
Then he, who forfeits first, has lost his Right.
Ber. Husbands a forfeiture of Love may make;
But what avails the forfeit none can take?
As in a General Wreck
The Pyrates sinks with his ill gotten Gains,
And nothing to anothers use remains:
So, by his loss, no gain to you can fall;
The Sea, and vast destruction swallows all.
Por. Yet he, who from the Shore the Wreck descries,
May unlawfully enrich him with the Prize.
Ber. Who sees the wreck, can yet no title plead,
Till he be sure the owner first is dead.
Por. If that be all the claim I want to love,
This Pyrate of your heart I'll soon remove;
And, at one stroak, the World and you set free.
Ber. Leave to the care of Heav'n that World and me.
Por. Heav'n, as Its Instrument, my Courage sends.
Ber. Heav'n ne'er sent those who fight for private ends.
We both are bound by trust, and must be true;
I to his Bed, and to his Empire you.
For he who to the bad betrays his trust,
Though he does good, becomes himself unjust.
Por. When *Brutus* did from *Cæsar Rome* redeem,
The Act was good.
Ber. ——— But 'twas not good in him.

You

You see the Gods adjudg'd it Parricide,
By dooming the Event on *Caesar's* side.
'Tis Virtue not to be oblig'd at all;
Or not conspire our Benefactor's Fall.

Por. You doom me then to suffer all this ill,
And yet I doom my self to love you still.

Ber. Dare not *Porphyrius* suffer then with me,
Since what for him I for my self decree?

Por. How can I bear those griefs you disapprove?

Ber. To ease 'em, I'll permit you still to love.

Por. That will but hast my death, if you think fit
Not to reward but barely to permit.
Love without hope does like a torture wound,
Which makes me reach in pain to touch the ground.

Ber. If hope, then, to your life so needful be,
Hope still.

Por. ——— Bless'd News!

Ber. ——— But hope, in Heav'n, not me.

Por. Love is too noble such deceits to use,
Referring me to Heav'n, your gift I lose,
So Princes cheaply may our wants supply,
When they give that their Treasurers deny.

Ber. Love blinds my virtue: If I longer stay,
It will grow dark, and I shall lose my way.

Por. One kiss from this fair hand can be no sin;
I ask not that you gave to *Maximin*.
In full reward of all the pains I've past,
Give me but one.

Ber. ——— Then let it be your last.

Por. 'Tis gone!
Like Souldiers prodigal of their Arrears,
One minute spends the Pay of many years.
——— Let but one more be added to the Sum,
And pay at once for all my pains to come.

Ber. Unthrifts will starve if we before hand give! [*pulling back her hand.*
I'll see you shall have just enough to live.

Enter Erotion.

Ero. Madam, the Emperor is drawing near;
And comes, they say, to seek *Porphyrius* here.

Ber. Alas!

Por. ——— I will not ask what he intends;
My Life, or Death, alone, on you depends.

Ber. I must withdraw but must not let him know [*Aside.*
How hard the Precepts of my Virtue grow:
But what e're Fortune is for me design'd,
Sweet Heav'n, be still to brave *Porphyrius* kind! [*Exit cum* Erotio.

Por. She's gone unkindly, and refus'd to cast
One glance to feed me for so long a fast.

Enter Maximin, Placidius, *Guards.*

Max. Porphyrius, since the Gods have ravish'd one,
I come in you to seek another Son.
Succeed him then in my Imperial state;
Succeed in all, but his untimely Fate.
If I adopt you with a better grace,
Pardon a Fathers tears upon my face,
And give 'em to *Charinus* memory:
May they not prove as ominous to thee.

Por. With what misfortunes Heav'n torments me still!
Why must I be oblig'd to one so ill? [*Aside.*

Max. Those offers which I made you Sir were such,
No private man should need to ballance much.

Por. Who durst his thought to such ambitious life; [*Kneeling.*
The greatness of it made me double the gift.
The distance was so vast, that to my view
It made the object seem at first untrue:
And now 'tis near, the sudden excellence
Strikes through, and flashes on my tender sense.

Max. Yet Heav'n and Earth, which so remote appear [*raising him.*
Are by the Air, which flows betwixt 'em, near,
And 'twixt us two, my Daughter be the Chain,
One end with me, and one with you remain.

Por. You press me down with such a glorious fate, [*Kneeling again.*
I cannot rise against the mighty weight:
Permit I may retire some little space,
And gather strength to bear so great a grace. [*Exit bowing.*

Placid. How Love and Fortune lavishly contend,
Which should *Porphyrius* wishes most befriend!
The Midstream's his; I, creeping by the side,
Am Shoulder'd off by his impetuous Tide. [*Aside.*

Enter Valerius *hastily.*

Val. I hope my business may my haste excuse;
For, Sir, I bring you most surprizing news.
The Christian Princess in her Tent confers
With fifty of your learn'd Philosophers; Whom

Whom with such Eloquence she does perswade,
That they are Captives to her reasons made.
I left 'em yielding up their vanquish'd Cause,
And all the Souldiers shouting her Applause;
Even *Apollonius* does but faintly speak,
Whose voice the murmers of th'assistance break.

Max. Conduct this Captive Christian to my Tent;
She shall be brought to speedy punishment.
——— in time some remedy provide, [*Exit* Valerius.
Left this contagious Error spread too wide.

Placid. T'infected Zeal you ——— no mercy show:
For, from Religion, all Rebellions grow.

Max. The silly crowd, by factious teachers, taught
To think that Faith untrue their youth was taught,
Run on in new opinions blindly bold;
Neglect, contemn, and then assault the old.
Th' infectious madness seizes every part,
And from the head distills upon the heart.
And first, they think their Prince's Faith not true,
And then to offer him anew;
Which if refus'd, all duty from 'em cast,
To their new Faith, they make new Kings at last.

Placid. Those ills by Male contents are often wrought,
That by their Prince their duty may be bought.
They head those holy Factions which they hate,
To sell their Duty at a dearer rate.
But, Sir, the Tribune is already here
With your fair Captive.

Max. ——————Bid 'em both appear.

Enter S. Catherine, Valerius, Apollonius, *Guards*.

See where she comes with that high Air and Meen;
Which Marks in Bonds, the greatness of a Queen.
What pity 'tis!——but I no charms must see
In her, who to our Gods is enemy.——
Fair Foe of Heav'n, whence comes this haughty pride; [*To her.*
Or is it Frenzy does your mind misguide
To scorn our Worship, and new Gods to find?

S. Cath. Nor pride, nor frenzy, but a settled mind;
Enlightned from above, my way does mark.

Max. Though Heaven be clear, the way to it is dark.

S. Cath. But where our Reason with our Faith does go;
We're both above enlightned, and below.

But

But Reason with your fond Religion fights,
For many Gods are many infinites;
This to the first Philosophers was known,
Who, under various names, ador'd but one.
Though your vain Poets after did mistake,
Who every Attribute a God did make,
And so obscene their Ceremonies be,
As good men loath, and *Cato* blush'd to see.

Max. War is my Province; Priest, why stand you mute?
You gain by Heaven, and therefore should dispute.

Apol. In all Religions, as in ours, there are
Some Solid truths and some things popular.
The popular in pleasing Fables lie,
The truths in Precepts of Morality.
And these to humane life are of that use,
That no Religion can such Rules produce.

S. Cath. Then let the whole dispute concluded be
Betwixt these Rules and Christianity.

Apol. And what more noble can your Doctrine preach,
Than Virtues which Philosophy does teach?
To keep the passions in severest awe,
To live to Reason (Nature's greatest Law)
To follow Virtue is its own reward;
And good and ill, as things without regard.

S. Cath. Yet few could follow those strict Rules they gave;
For humane Life, will humane frailties have:
And love of Virtue is but barren praise,
Airy as Fame; not strong enought to raise
The actions of the Soul above the sense.
Virtue grows cold without a recompence.
We virtuous Acts as Duty do regard
Yet are permitted to expect reward.

Apol. By how much more your Faith reward assures,
So much more frank our Virtue is than yours.

S. Cath. Blind men! you seek even those rewards you blame,
But ours are solid, yours an empty name.
Either to open praise your Acts you guide,
Or else reward your selves with secret pride.

Apol. Yet still our Moral Virtues you obey:
Ours are the Precepts, though apply'd your way.

S. Cath. 'Tis true, your Riches are the same we teach;
But in our practice they much higher reach.
You but forbid to take anothers due;
But we forbid even to desire it too.
Revenge of injuries you Virtue call,
But we forgiveness of our wrongs extol:

Immodest

Immodeſt Deeds you hinder to be wrought,
But we proſcribe the leaſt immodeſt thought.
So much your Virtues are in ours refin'd
That yours but reach the Actions, ours the mind.
Max. Anſwer in ſhort to what you heard her ſpeak. [*To* Apol.
Apol. Where truth prevails all arguments are weak.
To that convincing power I muſt give place:
And with that Truth, that Faith I will embrace.
Max. O Traytor to our Gods, but more to me;
Dar'ſt thou of any Faith, but of thy Prince's be?
But ſure thou rav'ſt; thy fooliſh error find:
Caſt up the poiſon that infects thy mind;
And ſhun the torments thou art ſure to feel.
Apol. Nor fire, nor torture, nor revenging Steel
Can on my Soul the leaſt Impreſſion make:
How gladly, Truth, I ſuffer for thy ſake!
Once I was ignorant of what was ſo;
But never can abandon Truth I know:
My Martyrdom I to thy Crown prefer;
Truth is a Cauſe for a Philoſopher.
S. Cath. Loſe not that Courage which Heaven does inſpire;
[*To* Apollonius.
But fearleſs go to be baptiz'd in fire.
Think 'tis a Triumph not a danger near:
Give him your blood; but give him not a tear.
Go, and prepare my Seat: and hovering be
Near that bright ſpace which is reſerv'd for me.
Max. Hence with the Traytor; bear him to his Fate.
Apol. Tyrant, I fear thy pity, not thy hate:
A Life Eternal I by Death obtain.
Max. Go, carry him, where he that Life may gain.
Exeunt Apollonius, Valerius *and Guards.*
Placid. from the Enchantreſs all theſe ills are come
You are not ſafe till you pronounce her doom:
Each hour ſhe lives a Legion [illegible]
She'll make your Army Martyrs in a day.
Max. 'Tis juſt: this Chriſtian Sorcereſs ſhall dye:
(Would I had never prov'd her Sorcery:)
Not that her charming tongue this change has bred;
I fear 'tis ſomething that her eyes have fed.
I love: and am aſham'd it ſhould be ſeen. [*Aſide.*
Placid. Sir, ſhall ſhe dye?
Max. ——— Conſider ſhe's a Queen.
Placid. Thoſe Claims in *Cleopatra* ended were.
Max. How many *Cleopatra's* live in her? [*Aſide.*

Placid. When you condemn'd her, Sir, she was a Queen.
Max. No, Slave; she only was a Captive then.
S. Cath. My joyful Sentence you defer too long.
Max. I never knew that Life was such a wrong,
But if you needs will dye.—it shall be so.
——Yet think it does from your perverseness flow:
Men say, indeed, that I in Blood delight;
But you shall find——Hast take her from my sight.
——For *Maximin* I have too much confess'd:
And for a Lover not enough express'd.
Absent, I may her Martyrdom decree;
But one look more will make that Martyr me. *Exit.* S. Cath *guard.*
Placid. What is it, Sir, that shakes your mighty mind?
Max. Somewhat I am asham'd that thou should'st find.
Placid. If it be love that does your Soul possess——
Max. Are you my Rival that so soon you guess?
Placid. Far, mighty Prince, be such a Crime from me, [*Kneeling.*
Which, with the pride, includes impiety.
Could you forgive it, yet the Gods above
Would never pardon me a Christian Love.
Max. Thou li'st——there's not a God inhabits there,
But for this Christian would all Heav'n forswear.
Ev'n *Jove* would try more shapes her Love to win:
And in new Birds, and unknown Beasts would sin:
At least, if *Jove* could Love like *Maximin.*
Placid. A Captive, Sir, who would a Martyr die?
Max. She courts not Death, but shuns Captivity.
Great gifts, and greater promises I'll make;
And what Religion is't, but they can shake?
She shall live high: Devotion in distress
Is born, but vanishes in happiness. [*Exit.* Maximin.
Placid. solus. His Son forgot, his Empress unappeas'd;
How soon the Tyrant with new love is seiz'd!
Love, [illegible] does variously inspire:
He stirs in gentle [illegible]
Like that of incense on the Altars laid:
But raging flames tempestuous Souls invade.
A fire which every windy passion blows;
With pride it mounts, and with revenge it glows.
But I accurs'd who servilely must move;
And sooth his passion for his Daughters Love!
Small hope, 'tis true, attends my mighty care.
But of all passions, Love does last despair. [*Exit.*

ACT

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Royal Pavillion.

Maximin, Placidius, *Guards and Attendants.*

Max. THis Love that never could my youth engage,
Peeps out his Coward Head to dare my age,
Where haſt thou been thus long, thou ſleeping form,
That wak'ſt like drowſie Sea-men in a ſtorm?
A ſullen hour thou chuſeſt for thy Birth:
My Love ſhoots up in tempeſts, as the Earth
Is ſtirr'd and looſen'd in a blaſtring Wind,
Whoſe blaſts to waiting Flowers her Womb unbind.
Placid. Forgive me, if I ſay your paſſions are
So rough, as if in Love you would make War.
But Love is ſoft———
And with ſoft beauty tenderly complies;
In Lips it laughs, and languiſhes in Eyes.
Max. There let it laugh or like an infant weep:
I cannot ſuch a ſupple paſſion keep.
Mine, ſtiff with Age, and ſtubborn as my Arms,
Walks upright; ſtoops not to, but meets her Charms.
Placid. Yet fierceneſs ſuits not with her gentle kind:
They brave aſſaults but may be undermin'd.
Max. Till I in thoſe mean Arts am better read,
Court thou, and fawn, and flatter in my ſtead.

Enter S. Catharine.

She comes, and now, methinks, I could obey:
Her Form glides through me and my heart gives way:
This Iron heart which no impreſſion took
From Wars, melts down and runs, if ſhe but look [*Exit* Maximin.
Placid. Madam, I from the Emperor am come
T'applaud your Virtue, and reverſe your Doom.
He thinks, whatever your Religion be,
This Palm is owing to your conſtancy.
S. Cath. My conſtancy from him ſeeks no Renown;
Heaven, that propos'd the Courſe, will give the Crown.

Placid. But Monarchs are the Gods Vicegerents here;
Heav'n gives rewards; but what it gives they bear:
From Heav'n to you the Ægyptian Crown is sent,
Yet 'tis a Prince who does the Gift present.

S. Cath. The Deity I serve, had he thought fit,
Could have preserv'd my Crown unconquer'd yet:
But when his secret Providence design'd
To level that, he level'd too my mind;
Which by contracting its desires, is taught
The humble quiet of possessing naught.

Placid. To Stoicks leave a happiness so mean:
Your Virtue does deserve a nobler Scene.
You are not for obscurity design'd:
But, like the Sun, must cheer all humane kind.

S. Cath. No happiness can be where is no rest:
Th' unknown, untalk'd of man is only blest.
He, as in some safe Cliff, his Cell does keep,
From thence he views the labours of the Deep:
The Gold-fraught Vessel which mad Tempests beat,
He sees now vainly make to his retreat:
And, when from far, the tenth Wave does appear,
Shrinks up in silent joy that he's not there.

Placid. You have a Pilot who your Ship secures;
The Monarch both of Earth and Seas is yours.
He who so freely gives a Crown away,
Yet askt no tribute but what you may pay.
One smile on him a greater wealth bestows,
Than *Ægypt* yields, when *Nilus* overflows.

S. Cath. I cannot wholly innocent appear,
Since I have liv'd such words as these to hear.
O Heav'n, which dost of chastity take care!——

Placid. Why do you lose an unregarded Pray'r?
If happiness, as you believe, be rest,
That quiet [illegible] the Gods possest:——
[illegible]
The little business of the World below.

S. Cath. This Doctrin well-befitted him, who thought
A casual World was from Wild Atomes wrought:
But such an Order in each chance we see,
(Chain'd to its Cause, as that to its Decree,)
That none can think a Workmanship so rare,
Was built or kept without a Workman's care.

[*To them* Maximin, *Attendants and Guards.*

Max. Madam, you from *Placidius* may have heard
Some News, which will your happiness regard.

For

For what a greater happiness can be,
Than to be courted and be lov'd by me?
The Ægyptian Crown I to your hands remit;
And, with it, take his heart who offers it. [*She turns aside.*
Do you my Person and my Gift contemn?

S. Cath. My hopes pursue a brighter Diadem.

Max. Can any brighter than the Roman be?
I find my proffer'd Love has cheapen'd me:
Since you neglect to answer my desires,
Know, Princes, you shall burn in other Fires.
——Why should you urge me to so black a deed?
Think all my anger did from Love proceed.

S. Cath. Nor threats, nor promises my mind can move:
Your furious anger, nor your impious Love.

Max. The Love of you can never impious be;
You are so pure——
That in the Act 'twou'd change th' impiety.
Heav'n would unmake it sin——

S. Cath. I take my self from thy detested sight:
To my respect thou hast no longer right:
Such pow'r in Bonds true Piety can have,
That I command and thou art but a Slave. [*Exit S. Cath.*

Max. To what a height of arrogance she swells!
Pride or ill Nature still with Virtue dwells;
Her Death shall set me free this very hour;
——But is her Death within a Lovers pow'r?
Wild with my rage, more Wild with my desire,
Like meeting Tides—but mine are Tides of fire.
What petty promise was't that caus'd this frown?

Placid. You heard: no less than the Ægyptian Crown.

Max. Throw *Ægypt*'s by, and offer in the stead;
Offer——the Crown of *Berenice*'s Head.
I am resolv'd to double till I win;
About it straight, and send *Porphyrius* in.
We look like Eagles soaring in the sky;
While her high flights, still raises mine more high.
[*To him* Porphyrius.

Por. I come, Sir, to expect your great Commands.

Max. My happiness lies only in thy hands.
And, since I have adopted thee my Son,
I'll keep no Secret from thy breast unknown;
Led by the int'rest of my rising Fate,
I did espouse this Empress whom I hate:
And therefore with less shame I may declare,
That I the Fetters of thy Captive wear.

Por.

Por. Sir, you amaze me with ſo ſtrange a Love.
Max. Pity, my Son, thoſe flames you diſapprove.
The cauſe of Love can never be aſſign'd;
'Tis in no Face, but in the Lovers mind.
Por. Yet there are Beauties which attract all Hearts;
And all mankind lies open to their Darts,
Whoſe Soveraignity, without diſpute, we grant;
Such Graces, ſure, your Empreſs does not want.
Max. Beauty has bounds,——
And can no more to every Heart be ſo,
Than any Coin through every Land can go.
Some ſecret Grace, which is but ſo to me.
Though not ſo great, may yet more pow'rful be:
All guard themſelves when ſtronger Foes invade;
Yet, by the weak ſurprizes may be made:
But you, my Son, are not to judge, but aid.
Por. What is it, Sir, you can require of me?
Max. I would from *Berenice*'s Bonds be free,
This Yoke of Marriage from us both remove,
Where two are bound to draw, though neither Love.
Por. Neither the Gods nor Man will give conſent,
To put in practice your unjuſt intent.
Max. Both muſt conſent to that which I decree.
Por. The Souldiers love her Brother's memory;
And for her ſake ſome mutiny will ſtir.
Max. Our parting therefore—— ſhall be fought by her.
Go, bid her ſue for a divorce, or die;
I'll cut the knot if ſhe will not unty:
Haſt to prepare her, and thy ſelf return;
Thy *Hymen*'s Torch this day with mine ſhall burn. [*Exit.*
Por. Rather my Funeral Torch;—for though I know
Valeria's fair, and that ſhe loves me too,
'Gainſt her my Soul is arm'd on every part:
Yet there are Secret Rivets to my heart;
Where *Berenice*'s Charms have found the way;
Subtile as Lightnings, but more fierce than they.
How ſhall I this avoid, or gain that Love!
So near the Rock, I to the Port muſt move.
[*To him*, Valeria *attended.*
Fr. *Val. Porphyrius*, now my joy I may expreſs,
Nor longer hide the Love I muſt poſſeſs.
Should I have ſtaid till Marriage made us one,
You might have thought it was by duty done;
But of my Heart I now a Preſent make;
And give it you, e'er it be yours to take.

Accept

Accept it as when early fruit we send:
And let the rareness the small gift commend.
Por. Great Monarchs, like your Father, often give
What is above a Subject to receive:
But faithful Officers should countermand,
And stop the gift that passes through their hand;
And to their Prince, that mass of Wealth restore,
Which lavish'd thus, would make whole nations Poor.
Val. But to this gift, a double right you have:
My Father gives but what before I gave.
Por. In vain you such unequal Presents make,
Which I still want capacity to take.
Such fatal bounty once the *Gauls* did show;
They threw their Rings, but threw their Targets too.
Bounty so plac'd, does more like ruin look;
You pour the Ocean on a narrow Brook.
Val. Yet if your Love before prepares a Boat,
The stream so pour'd, drowns not, but makes it float.
Por. But when the Vessel is on Quick-sands cast,
The flowing Tide does more the sinking hast.
Val. And on what Quick-sands can your heart be thrown?
Can you a Love besides *Valeria*'s own?
Por If he who at your feet his heart would lay,
Be met with first, and robb'd upon the way.
You may indeed the Robbers strength accuse,
But pardon him who did the present lose.
Val. Who is this Thief that does my right possess?
Name her, and then we of her strength may guess——
From whence does your unwonted silence come?
Por. She bound and gagg'd me, and has left me dumb.
Val. But of my wrongs I will aloud complain;
False man thou would'st excuse thy self in vain:
For thee I did a Maidens blush forsake;
And own'd a Love thou hast refus'd to take.
Por. Refus'd it!——like a Miser midst his store,
Who grasps, and grasps, till he can hold no more;
And when his strength is wanting to his mind,
Looks back and sighs on what he left behind.
Val. No, I resume that heart thou didst possess;
My Father shall my injuries redress:
With me thou losest his Imperial Crown,
And speedy Death attends upon his frown.
Por. You may revenge your wrongs a nobler way;
Command my Death and I will soon obey;
Val. No, live; for on thy Life my Cure depends:
In Debtors Deaths all obligation ends:

'Twil-

'Twill be some ease ungrateful thee to call;
And Bankrupt-like, say, Trusting him lost all.

Por. Upbraided thus what gen'rous man would live!
But fortune will revenge what you forgive.
When I refuse; (as in few hours I must)
This offer'd grace, your Father will be just.

Val. Be just! say rather he will cruel prove,
To kill that only person I can love.
Yet so it is!——
Your int'rest in the Army is so high;
That he must make you his or you must die!
It is resolv'd! whoe'er my Rival be, [*Aside after a pause.*
I'll show that I deserve him more than he,
And if at last he does ingrateful prove,
My constancy it self rewards my Love. [*Exit.*

Por. She's gone, and gazing round about, I see
Nothing but death, or glorious misery;
Here Empire stands, if I could Love displace;
There, hopeless Love, with more imperial grace;
Thus as a sinking Hero compass'd round,
Beckons his bravest For for his last wound,
And him into his part of Fame does call,
I'll turn my Face to love, and there I'll fall.

To him Berenice, Erotion.

Ber. I come, *Porphyrius* to congratulate
This happy change of your exalted Fate:
You to the Empire are, I hear, design'd
And fair *Valeria* must th' Alliance bind.

Por. Would Heav'n had my succession so decreed,
That I in all might *Maximin* succeed!
He offers me th' Imperial Crown, it is true:
I would succeed him, but tis in you.

Ber. In me! I never did accept your Love;
But you, I see, would handsomly remove:
And I can give you [illegible] Crown:
I always thought you merited a Crown.

Por. I never sought that Crown but on your brow;
But you with such indifference would allow
My change, that you have kill'd me with that breath:
I feel your scorn cold as the hand of Death.

Ber. You'll come to life in your *Valeria*'s arms:
'Tis true, I cannot boast of equal charms;
Or if I could, I never did admit
Your Love to me, but only suffer'd it.
I am a Wife, and can make no return;
And 'twere but vain, in hopeless fires to burn.

Por

Por. Unkind! can you, whom only I adore,
Set open to your Slave the prison-door?
You use my heart just as you would afford
A fatal freedom to some harmless bird,
Whom, breeding, you ne'er taught to seek its food;
And now let flie to perish in the Wood.

Ber. Then, if you will love on, and disobey,
And lose an Empire for my sake, you may.
Will a kind look from me pay all this score,
For you well know you must expect no more?

Por. All I deserve it will, not all I wish:
But I will brave the Tyrants rage for this.
If I refuse, my death must needs ensue;
But you shall see that I dare die for you.

Ber. Would you for me,
A Beauty, and an Empire too deny?
I love you now so well——that you shall die,
Die mine; 'tis all I can with honour give:
Nor should you die, if after, I would live.
But when your marriage and your death I view,
That makes you false, but this will keep you true.

Por. Unbind thy brows, and look abroad to see,
O mighty Love, thy mightiest Victory!

Ber. And yet——is there no other way to try;
'Tis hard to say I love, and let you die.

Por. Yes, there remains some help, which you might give,
If you, as I would die for Love, would live.

Ber. If death for Love be sweet, sure life is more:
Teach me the means your safety to restore.

Por. Your Tyrant the Ægyptian Princess loves;
And to that height his swelling passion moves,
That, fearing in your death the Soldiers force,
He from your bed does study a Divorce.

Ber. Th'Ægyptian Princes I disputing heard,
And as a Miracle her mind regard.
But yet I wish that this Divorce be true.

Por. 'Tis, Madam, but it must be sought by you.
By this he will all mutinies prevent;
And this, as well, secures your own content.

Ber. I hate this Tyrant, and his bed I loath;
But, once submitting, I am ty'd to both:
Ti'd to that honour, which all Women owe,
Though not their Husbands person, yet their vow.
Something so Sacred in that Bond there is,
That none should think there could be ought amiss:

And if there be, we ſhould in ſilence hide
Thoſe faults, which blame our choice when they are ſpi'd.
Por. But, ſince to all the World his crimes are known,
And, by himſelf the Civil War's begun,
Would you th' advantage of the fight delay,
If, ſtriking firſt, you were to win the day?
Ber. I would, like Jews upon their Sabbath fall:
And, rather than ſtrike firſt, nor ſtrike at all.
Por. Againſt your ſelf you ſadly propheſie:
You either this Divorce muſt ſeek or die.
Ber. Then death from all my griefs ſhall ſet me free.
Por. And would you rather chuſe your death, than me.
Ber. My earthy part———
Which is my Tyrants right, death will remove,
I'll come all Soul and Spirit to your Love.
With ſilent ſteps I'll follow you all day;
Or elſe before you in the Sun-beams, play.
I'll lead you thence to melancholly Groves.
And there repeat the Scenes of our paſt Loves.
At night, I will within your Curtains peep;
With empty arms embrace you while you ſleep.
In gentle dreams I often will be by;
And ſweep along, before your cloſing eye.
All dangers from your Bed I will remove;
But guard it moſt from any future Love.
And when at laſt, in pity you will die:
I'll watch your birth of Immortality:
Then, Turtle-like, I'll to my mate repair;
And teach you your firſt flight in open Air. [*Exit* Berenice *cum* (Erotio.
Por. She has but done what honour did require:
Nor can I blame that Love, which I admire.
But then her death!
I'll ſtand betwixt, it firſt ſhall pierce my heart:
We will be ſtuck together on his dart.
But yet the danger not ſo high does grow:
I'll charge death firſt, perhaps repulſe him too.
But if o'r-power'd, I muſt be over-come;
Forc'd back, I'll fight each inch into my Tomb. [Ex

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Indian Cave.

Placidius, Nigrinus. Nigrinus *with two drawn Swords held upwards in his hands.*

Placid. ALL other means have fail'd to move her heart;
Our last recourse is therefore to your Art.
Nig. Of Wars, and Bloodshed, and of dire Events,
Of Fates, and fighting Kings, their Instruments,
I could with greater certainty foretel;
Love only does in doubts and darkness dwell:
For, like a Wind, it in no quarter stays;
But points and veers each hour a thousand ways.
On Women Love depends, and they on Will;
Chance turns their Orb, while Destiny sits still.
Placid. Leave nothing unattempted in your power:
Remember you oblige an Emperour.
Nig. An earthy Fiend by compact me obeys;
But him to light intents I must not raise.
Some Astral forms I must invoke by pray'r,
Fram'd all of purest Atoms of the Air;
Not in their Natures simply good or ill;
But most subservient to bad Spirits will.
Nakar of those does lead the mighty band,
For eighty Legions move at his Command:
Gentle to all, but far above the rest,
Mild *Nakar* loves his soft *Damilcar* best.
In Aery Chariots they together ride,
And sip the dew as through the Clouds they glide:
These are the Spirits which in Love have pow'r.
Placid. Haste, and invoke 'em in a happy hour.
Nig. And so it proves: for, counting Sev'n from Noon,
'Tis *Venus* hour, and in the wexing Moon.
With Chalk I first describe a circle here,
Where these Ætherial Spirits must appear.
Come in, come in, for here they will be strait:
Around, around, the place I fumigate:
My fumigation is to *Venus*, just:
The Souls of Roses, and red Corals dust:

A lump of *Sperma Ceti*; and to theſe
The ſtalks and chips of *Lignum Aloes.*
And, laſt, to make my fumigation good,
'Tis mixt with Sparrows brains, and Pigeons blood.
Nigrinus *takes up the Swords.*
They come, they come, they come! I hear 'em now.
Placid. A death like damp ſits cold upon my brow:
And miſty vapours ſwim before my ſight.
Nig. They come not in a ſhape to cauſe your fright.
Nakar *and* Damilcar, *deſcend in Clouds, and ſing.*
Nakar. *Hark my* Damilcar, *we are call'd below!*
Dam. *Let us go, let us go!*
Go to relieve the care
Of longing Lovers in Deſpair!
Nakar. *Merry, merry, merry, we ſail from the Eaſt,*
Half tipled at a Rain-bow Feaſt.
Dam. *In the Bright Moon ſhine, while winds whiſtle loud,*
Tivy, tivy, tivy, we mount and we fly,
All racking along in a Downy white Cloud:
And leſt our leap from the Skie ſhould prove too far,
We ſlide on the back of a new falling Star.
Nakar. *And drop from above,*
In a Gelly of Love!
Dam. *But now the Sun's down, and the Elements red,*
The Spirits of Fire againſt us make head!
Nakar. *They muſter, they muſter, like Gnats in the Air:*
Alas: I muſt leave thee my Fair;
And to my light Horſe-men repair.
Dam. *O ſtay for you need not to fear 'em to night;*
The wind is for us, and blows full in their ſight:
And o'r the wide Ocean we fight:
Like leaves in the Autumn our foes will fall down;
And hiſs in the Water———
Both. *And hiſs in the Water, and drown!*
Nakar. *But their Men lie ſecurely intrench'd in a Cloud:*
And a Trumpeter-Hornet to Battle ſounds loud,
Dam. *Now Mortals that ſpie*
How we tilt in the Skie
With wonder will gaze;
And fear ſuch events as will ne'er come to paſs!
Nakar. *Stay you to perform what the man will have done.*
Dam. *Then call me again when the Battle is won.*
Both. *So ready and quick is a Spirit of Air*
To pity the Lover, and ſuccour the fair,
That, ſilent and ſwift, that little ſoft God,
Is here with a wiſh, and is gone with a nod.

The

The Clouds part, Nakar *flies up, and* Damilicar *down.*

Nig. I charge thee, Spirit, ſtay; and by the pow'r — *To* Damil.
Of *Nakar*'s Love, and of this Holy wand,
On the North quarter of my Circle ſtand.
(Sev'n foot around for my defence I take!)
To all my queſtions faithful anſwers make;
So may'ſt thou live thy thouſand years in peace,
And ſee thy Aery Progeny encreaſe:
So may'ſt thou ſtill continue young and fair,
Fed by the blaſt of pure Ætherial Air.
And, thy full term expir'd, without all pain,
Diſſolve into thy Aſtral Source again.

Dam. Name not my hated Rival *Gemory*,
And I'll ſpeak true whate'er thy queſtions be.

Nig. Thy Rivals hated name I will refrain:
Speak, ſhall the Emperour his Love obtain?

Dam. Few hours ſhall paſs before your Emperour ſhall be
Poſſeſs'd of that he loves, or from that love be free.

Placid. Shall I enjoy that Beauty I adore?

Dam. She Suppliant like, e'r long, thy Succour ſhall implore:
And thou with her thou lov'ſt in happineſs may'ſt live:
If ſhe not dies before, who all thy joys can give.

Nig. Say, what does the Ægyptian Princeſs now?

Dam. A gentle ſlumber ſits upon her brow.

Nig. Go, ſtand before her in a Golden dream?
Set all the pleaſures of the World to ſhow,
And in vain joys let her looſe Spirit flow.

Dam. Twice fifty Tents remove her from your ſight,
But I'll cut through them all with rays of light:
And covering other objects to your eyes,
Show where intranc'd in ſilent ſleep ſhe lies.

Damilcar *ſtamps, and the Bed ariſes with* St. Catharine *in it.*

Dam. ſinging. *You pleaſing Dreams of Love and ſweet delight,*
Appear before this ſlumbring Virgins ſight:
Soft Viſions ſet her free
From mournful Piety.
Let her ſad thoughts from Heav'n retire;
And let the melancholly Love
Of thoſe remoter joys above
Give place to your more ſprightly fire.
Let purling Streams be in her fancy ſeen;
And flow'ry Meads, and Vales of cheerful Green:
And in the midſt of deathleſs Groves
Soft ſighing wiſhes ly,
And ſmiling hopes faſt by,

And

And just beyond 'em over-laughing lovers.
A Scene of a Paradise *is discovered.*

Placid. Some pleasing objects do her mind employ:
For on her face I read a wandring joy.

SONG.

Dam. *Ah how sweet it is to love,*
Ah how gay is young desire!
And what pleasing pains we prove
When we first approach Loves fire!
Pains of Love be sweeter far
Than all other pleasures are.

Sighs which are from Lovers blown,
Do but gently heave the Heart:
Ev'n the Tears they shed alone
Cure, like trickling Balm their smart.
Lovers when they lose their breath,
Bleed away in easy Death

Love and Time with Reverence use,
Treat 'em like like 'a parting Friend:
Nor the Golden gifts refuse
Which in youth sincere they send:
For each year their price is more,
And they less simple than before.

Love, like Spring-Tides full and high,
Swells in every youthful vein:
But each Tide does less supply,
Till they quite shrink in again:
If a flow in age appear,
'Tis but rain, and runs not clear.

At the end of the Song, a Dance of Spirits. After which Amariel, *the Guardian-Angel of* St. Catharine, *descends to soft Musick, with a flaming Sword. The Spirits crawl off the Stage amazedly, and* Damilcar *runs to a corner of it.*

Amar. From the bright Empire of Eternal Day,
Where waiting minds for Heav'ns Commission stay,
Amariel flies: (a darted Mandate came
From that great Will which moves this mighty frame,

Bid

Bid me to thee, my Royal Charge, repair,
To guard thee from the Damons of the Air;
My flaming Sword, above 'em to diſplay,
(All keen and ground upon the edge of day;)
The flat to ſweep the Viſions from thy mind,
The edge to cut 'em through that ſtay behind.)
Vain Spirits, you that ſhunning Heav'ns high noon,
Swarm here beneath the concave of the Moon,
What folly, or what rage your duty blinds,
To violate the ſleep of Holy minds?
Hence to the task aſſign'd you here below:
Upon the Ocean make loud tempeſts blow:
Into the Wombs of hollow Clouds repair,
And cruſh out Thunder from the bladder'd Air.
From pointed Sun-beams take the miſts they drew,
And ſcatter them again in pearly dew:
And of the bigger drops they drain below,
Some mould in Hail, and others ſtamp in Snow.
Dam. Mercy, bright Spirit, I already feel:
The piercing edge of thy immortal Steel:
Thou Prince of Day, from Elements Art free;
And I all body when compar'd to thee.
Thou tread'ſt the Abyſs of light!
And where it ſtreams with open eyes canſt go:
We wander in the fields of Air below:
Changlings and Fools of Heav'n: and thence ſhut out,
Wildly we roam in diſcontent about:
Groſs-heavy-fed, next man in ignorance and ſin,
And ſpotted all without, and dusky all within.
Without thy Sword I periſh by thy ſight.
I reel, I ſtagger, and am drunk with light.
Ama. If e'er again thou on this place art found;
Full fifty years I'll chain thee under ground;
The damps of earth ſhall be thy daily food;
All ſwoln and bloated like a dungeon toad:
And when thou ſhalt be freed, yet thou ſhalt ly
Gaſping upon the Ground, too faint to fly;
And lag below thy fellows in the ſky.
Dam. O pardon, pardon, this accurſed deed;
And I no more on Magick fumes will feed;
Which drew me hither by their pow'rful ſtreams.
Ama. to S. Cath.] Go expiate thy Guilt in holy dreams [*Ex. Dam.*
But thou ſweet Saint, henceforth diſturb'd no more
With dreams not thine, thy thoughts to Heav'n reſtore.
The Angel aſcends, and the Scene ſhuts.

Nig. Some holy being does invade this place,
And from their duty does my Spirits chase.
I dare no longer near it make abode:
No Charms prevail againſt the Chriſtian's God.
Placid. How doubtfully theſe Spectres Fate foretel!
In double ſenſe, twi-light truth they dwell:
Like fawning Courtiers, for ſucceſs they wait,
And then come ſmiling and declare for fate.
Enter Maximin *and* Porphyrius, *attended by* Valerius *and Guards.*
But ſee, the Tyrant and my Rival come:
I, like the Fiends, will flatter in his Doom:
None but a Fool diſtaſtful truth, will tell,
So be it new, and pleaſe, 'tis full as well.
Placid. *whiſpers with the Emperour who ſeems pleaſed.*
Max. You charm me with your News, which I'll reward:
By hopes we are for coming joys prepar'd:
Poſſeſs her love, or from that love be free———
Heav'n ſpeaks me fair: if ſhe as kind can prove,
I ſhall poſſeſs, but never quit my Love.
Go, tell me when ſhe wakes—— [*Exit* Placidius.
Porphyrius *ſeems to beg ſomething of him.*
———*Porphyrius*, no;
She has refus'd, and I will keep my vow.
Por. For your own ſake, your cruel vow defer;
The time's unſafe, your Enemies are near.
And to diſpleaſe your Men when they ſhould fight———
Max. My looks alone my Enemies will fright;
And o'r my men I'll ſet my careful Spies,
To watch Rebellion in their very Eyes.
No more, I cannot bear the leaſt reply.
Por. Yet, Tyrant, thou ſhalt periſh e'er ſhe dye. [*Aſide.*
Enter Valeria.
Valeria here! how Fortune treats me ſtill
With various harms, magnificently ill!
Max. Valeria, I was ſending to your Tent, [*To* Valeria.
But my Commands your preſence does prevent.
This is the Hour wherein the Prieſt ſhall joyn
Your holy Loves, and make *Porphyrius* mine.
[*Val. aſide.*] Now hold, my heart, and *Venus* I implore,
Be judge if ſhe he loves deſerves no more.
Por. aſide.] Paſt hope! and all in vain I would preſerve
My Life, not for my ſelf, but her I ſerve.
Val. I come, Great Sir, your Juſtice to demand. [*To the Emp.*
Max. You cannot doubt it from a Father's hand.

Por.

Por. Sir, I confeſs before her Suit be known;
And, by my ſelf condemn'd, my crime I own.
I have refus'd———

Val. ——Peace, Peace, while I confeſs
I have refus'd thee for unworthineſs.

Por. I am amaz'd

Max. ——What Riddles do you uſe?
Dare either of you my Commands refuſe?

Val. Yes, I dare own howe'er 'twas wiſely done
T'adopt ſo mean a Perſon for your Son:
So low you ſhould not for your Daughter chuſe:
And therefore, Sir, this marriage I refuſe.

Max. You lik'd the Choice when firſt I thought it fit.

Val. I had not then enough conſider'd it.

Max. And you have now conſider'd it too much:
Secrets of Empire are not ſafe to touch.

Por. Let not your mighty anger riſe too high:
'Tis not *Valeria* merits it, but I.
My own unworthineſs ſo well I knew,
That from her Love I conſciouſly withdrew.

Val. Thus rather than endure the little ſhame
To be refus'd, you blaſt a Virgin's name.
You to refuſe, and I to be deny'd!
Learn more diſcretion, or be taught leſs pride.

Por. O Heav'n, in what a Lab'rinth am I led!
I could get out, but ſhe detains the Thread!
Now I muſt wander on till I can ſee,
Whether her pity or revenge it be! [*Aſide.*

Max. With what Child's anger do you think you play?
I'll puniſh both, if either diſobey.

Val. Since all the fault was mine, I am content
Porphyrius ſhould not ſhare the puniſhment.

Por. Blind that I was till now, that could not ſee,
'Twas all th' effects of generoſity.
She loves me, e'en to ſuffer for my ſake;
And on her ſelf would my refuſal take. [*Aſide.*

Max. Children to ſerve their Parents int'reſt live. *To Val.*
Take heed what doom againſt your ſelf you give.

Por. Since ſhe muſt ſuffer, if I do not ſpeak,
'Tis time the Laws of Decency to break.
She told me, Sir, that ſhe your choice approv'd,
And (though I bluſh to own it) ſaid ſhe lov'd,
Lov'd me deſertleſs, who with ſhame, confeſt
Another Flame had ſeiz'd upon my Breſt.

Which when, too late, the generous Princess knew,
And fear'd your Justice would my Crime pursue,
Upon her self she makes the Tempests fall, ——————
And her refusal her contempt would call.

Val. He raves, Sir, and to cover my disdain,
Unhandsomly would his denial feign.
And all means failing him, at last would try ——————
T'usurp the credit of a scorn, and die.
But—— let him live—— his punishment shall be
The grief his pride will bring for losing me.

Max. You both obnoxious to my Justice are;
And, Daughter, you have not deserv'd my care.
'Tis my command you strictly guarded be,
Till your fantastick Quarrel you agree.

Por. Sir——

Max. I'll not hear you speak, her crime is plain,
She owns her pride which you perhaps may feign.
She shall be Prisoner till she bend her mind
To that which is for both of you design'd.

Val. You'll find it hard my free-born Will to bound.

Max. I'll find that pow'r o'r Wills which Heav'n n'er found.
Free Will's a Cheat in any one but me;
In all but Kings 'tis willing Slavery.
An unseen Fate which forces the desire,
The Will of Puppets danc'd upon a Wire.
A Monarch is
The Spirit of the World in every mind;
He may match Wolves to Lambs, and make it kind.
Mine is the business of your little Fates;
And though you War, like petty wrangling States,
You're in my hand; when I bid you cease,
You shall be crush'd together into peace.

Val. aside. Thus by the World my courage will be priz'd;
Seeming to scorn, who am, alas, despis'd:
Dying for Love's, fulfilling Honour's Laws;
A secret Martyr while I own no cause. [*Exit* Valeria.

Max. Porphyrius, stay; there's something I would hear:
You said you lov'd, and you must tell me where.

Por. All Heav'n is to my sole destruction bent. [*Aside.*

Max. You would, it seems have leisure to invent.

Por. Her name in pity, Sir, I must forbear,
Lest my offences you revenge on her.

Max. My promise for her Life I do engage.

Por. Will that, Sir, be remembred in your rage?

Max. Speak, or your silence more my rage will move;
I will argue, that you rival me in Love.

Por.

Por. Can you believe that my ambitious Flame
Should mount so high as *Berenice*'s name?
Max. Your guilty fears not approach what it would hide,
But draws me off, and (Lapwing-like) flies wide.
'Tis not my Wife, but Mistress you adore:
Though that affronts yet this offends me more.
Who courts my Wife ——
Does to my Honour more injurious prove;
But he who courts my mistress, wrongs my Love.
Por. Th' Ægyptian Princess ne'er could move my heart.
Max. You could not perish by a nobler dart.
Por. Sir, I presume not beauties to compare:
But in my eye my Princess is as fair.
Max. Your Princess! then it seems, though you deny
Her name you love, you own her Quality.
Por. Though not by birth or Title so, yet she
Who rules my heart, a Princess is to me.
Max. No, no —— 'Tis plain that word you unawares did use,
And told a truth which now you would excuse.
Besides my Wife and Mistress, here are none
Who can the Title of a Princess own.
Por. There is one more ——
Your Daughter, Sir: let that your doubt remove.
Max. But she is not that Princess whom you love.
Por. I nam'd not love, though it might doubtful seem;
She's fair; and is that Princess I esteem.
Max. Go, and to passion your esteem improve,
While I command her to receive your love. [*Exit Por.*

Enter S. Catherine.

S. Cath. I come not now as Captive to your pow'r,
To beg; but as high Heavns Ambassadour,
The Laws of my Religion to fulfil;
Heav'n sends me to return you Good for Ill.
Your Empress to your Love I would restore;
And to your mind the Peace it had before.
Max. While in another's name you Peace declare,
Princess, you in your own proclaim a War.
Your too great pow'r does your design oppose;
You make those Breaches which you strive to close.
S. Cath. That little Beauty which too much you prize,
Seeks not to move your Heart, or draw your Eyes:
Your love to *Berenice* is due alone;
Love, like that pow'r which I adore, is one.

When fixt to one, it safe at Anchor rides
And dares the fury of the Winds and Tides:
But losing once that hold, to the wide ocean born,
It drives away at will, to every Wave a scorn.
Max. If to new persons I my Love apply,
The Stars and Nature are in fault, not I;
My Loves are like my old Prætorian Bands,
Whose Arbitrary Pow'r their Prince Commands;
I can no more make Passion come or go,
Than you can bid your *Nile* ebb or flow.
'Tis lawless, and will love, and where it list:
And that's no sin which no man can resist:
Those who impute it to me as a Crime,
Would make a God of me before my time.
S. Cath. A God, indeed, after the Roman Style,
An Eagle mounting from a kindled Pile:
But you may make your self a God below:
For Kings who rule their own desires are so.
You roam about, and never are at rest;
By new desires, that is, new Torments, still possest.
Qualmish and loathing all you had before:
Yet with a sickly appetite to more.
As in a Fev'rish d[illegible] you still drink on;
And wonder why your thirst is never gone.
Love, like a Ghostly Vision, haunts your mind;
'Tis still before you what you left behind.
Max. How can I help those faults which Nature made?
My Appetite is sickly and decay'd,
And you forbid me change (the sick Mans ease)
Who cannot Cure, must humour his Disease.
S. Cath. Your mind should first the remedy begin;
You seek without, the Cure that is within.
The vain Experiments you make each day,
To find content, still finding it decay,
Without attempting more should let you see
That you have sought it where it ne'er could be.
But when you place your Joyes on things above,
You fix the wandring Planet of your Love:
Thence you may see
Poor humane kind all daz'd in open day,
Err after Bliss, and blindly miss their way:
The greatest happiness a Prince can know,
Is to love Heav'n above, do good below.
To them Berenice *and Attendants.*
Ber. That happiness may *Berenice* find,
Leaving these empty joyes of Earth behind:

And

And this frail being, where ſo ſhort a while
Th' unfortunate lament, and proſp'rous ſmile.
Yet a few days, and thoſe which now appear
In youth and Beauty like the blooming Year,
In life's ſweet Scene ſhall change; and cares ſhall come,
In heavy Age, and Death's relentleſs doom. (ſhun;
S. Cath. Yet Man, by pleaſures ſeeks that Fate which he would
And, ſuck'd in by the ſtream, does to the Whirl-pool run.
Max. How, Madam, are you to new ways inclin'd? [*To* Ber.
I fear the Chriſtian Sect perverts your mind.
Ber. Yes, Tyrant, know that I their Faith embrace,
And own it in the midſt of my diſgrace.
That Faith, which abject as it ſeems to thee,
Is Nobler than thy Purple Pageantry;
A Faith, which ſtill with Nature is at ſtrife;
And looks beyond it to a future life.
A Faith which vicious Souls abhor and fear,
Becauſe it ſhews Eternity too near.
And therefore every one———
With ſeeming ſcorn of it the reſt deceives:
All joyning not to own what each believes.
S. Cath. O happy Queen! whom Pow'r leads not aſtray,
Nor Youth's more powerful baniſhments betray.
Ber. Your arguments my reaſon firſt inclin'd,
And then your bright Example fix'd my mind.
Max. With what a holy Empreſs am I bleſt,
What ſcorn of Earth dwels in her heav'nly breſt!
My Crown's too mean; but he whom you adore,
Has one more bright, of Martyrdom in ſtore.
She dies, and I am from the Envy freed; [*Aſide.*
She has, I thank her, her own Death decreed.
No Souldier, now, will in her reſcue ſtir;
Her death is but in complaiſance to her.
I'll haſt to gratify her holy Will;
Heav'n grant her Zeal may but continue ſtill.
To Val. Tribune, a Guard to ſeize the Empreſs ſtrait,
Secure her perſon Priſoner to the State. [*Ex.* Maxim.
Val. going to her. Madam, believe 'tis with regret I come
To execute my angry Prince's doom.

Enter Porphyrius.

Por. What is it I behold! Tribune from whence
Proceeds this more than barbarous inſolence?
Val. Sir, I perform the Emperours Commands.
Por. Villain, hold off thy Sacrilegious hands,

Or

— r by the Gods —— retire without reply:
And, if he asks who bid thee, ſay 'twas I.
(Valerius *retires to a diſtance.*

Ber. Too generouſly your ſafety you expoſe
To ſave one moment her whom you muſt loſe.

Por. 'Twixt you and death ten thouſand lives there ſtand;
Have Courage, Madam, the *Prætorian* Band
Will all oppoſe your Tyrants Cruelty.

S. Cath. And I have Heav'n implor'd ſhe may not die.
As ſome to witneſs truth, Heav'ns call obey;
So ſome on earth muſt, to confirm it, ſtay.

Por. What Faith, what Witneſs is it that you name?

Ber. Knowing what ſhe believes, my Faiths the ſame.

Por. How am I croſs'd what way ſoe'er I go.
To the unlucky every thing is ſo
Now, Fortune, thou haſt ſhewn thy utmoſt ſpight:
The Souldiers will not for a Chriſtian fight.
And, Madam, all that I can promiſe now,
Is but to die before death reaches you.

Ber. Now Death draws near, a ſtrange perplexity
Creeps coldly on me, like a fear to die:
Courage, uncertain dangers may abate;
But who can bear th'approach of certain Fate?

S. Cath. The wiſeſt and the beſt ſome fear may ſhew;
And wiſh to ſtay, though they reſolve to go.

Ber. As ſome faint Pilgrim ſtanding on the ſhore,
Firſt views the Torrent he would venture o'er;
And then his Inn upon the farther ground:
Loth to wade through, and lother to go round:
Then dipping in his Staff do's trial make,
How deep it is; and, ſighing, pulls it back,
Sometimes reſolv'd to fetch his leap; and then
Runs to the bank, but there ſtops ſhort agen;
So I at once——
Both Heav'nly Fath, and human Fear obey;
And feel before me in an unknown way.
For this bleſt Voyage I will with Joy prepare;
Yet am aſham'd to be a ſtranger there.

S. Cath. You are not yet enough prepar'd to die:
Earth hangs too heavy for your Soul to flie.

Por. One way (and Heav'n, I hope, inſpires my mind)
I for your ſafety in this ſtraight can find:
But this fair Queen muſt farther my intent.

S. Cath. Name any way your reaſon can invent.

Por. to Ber. Though your Religion (which I cannot blame,
Becauſe my ſecret Soul avows the ſame)

Has

Has made your Life a forfeit to the Laws,
The Tyrant new-born paſſion is the cauſe.
Were this bright Princeſs once remov'd away,
Wanting the Food, the flame would ſoon decay.
And I'll prepare a faithful Guard this night
T' attend her perſon, and ſecure her flight.

Ber. to S. Cath. By this way I ſhall both from death be freed,
And yon unforc'd to any wicked deed.

S. Cath. Madam, my thoughts are with themſelves at ſtrife;
And Heav'n can witneſs how I prize your life:
But 'tis a doubtful Conflict I muſt try.
Betwixt my Pity and my Piety.
Staying, your precious Life I muſt expoſe:
Going, my Crown of Martyrdom I loſe.

Por. Your equal choice when Heav'n does thus divide,
You ſhould, like Heav'n, ſtill lean on Mercy's ſide.

S. Cath. The Will of Heav'n, judg'd by a private Breſt,
Is often what's our private intereſt.
And therefore thoſe who would that will obey,
Without their int'reſt muſt their Duty weigh.
As for my ſelf, I do not life Deſpiſe;
But as the greateſt gift of nature prize.
My Sex is weak, my fears of Death are ſtrong;
And whate'er is, its being would prolong.
Were there no ſting in Death, for me to die
Would not be Conqueſt, but ſtupidity.
But if vain Honour can confirm the Soul,
And ſenſe of ſhame the fear of Death controul,
How much more then ſhould Faith uphold the mind,
Which, ſhewing Death, ſhews future Life behind?

Ber. Of Death's contemp Heroick Proofs you give:
But, Madam, let my weaker Virtue live.
Your faith may bid you your own life reſign:
But not when yours muſt be involv'd with mine.
Since, then, you do not think me fit to die,
Ah, how can you that Life I beg, deny!

S. Cath. Heav'n does in this my greateſt trial make,
When I for it, the care of you forſake.
But I am plac'd as on a Theatre,
Where all my Acts to all Mankind appear,
To imitate my conſtancy or fear.
Then, Madam, judge what courſe I ſhould purſue,
When I muſt either Heav'n forſake, or you.

Por. Were ſaving *Berenice's* Life a ſin,
Heav'n had ſhut up your flight from *Maximin.*

S. Cath.

S. Cath. Thus with ſhort Plummets Heav'ns deep Will we ſound
That Vaſt Abyſs where humane wit is drown'd!
In our ſmall Skiff we muſt not launch too far;
We here but Coaſters, not diſcoverers are.
Faith's neceſſary Rules are plain and few;
We many, and thoſe needleſs Rules purſue:
Faith from our hearts into our heads we drive;
And make Religion all Contemplative.
You, on Heav'ns Will may witty Gloſſes feign;
But that which I muſt practiſe here, is plain:
If the All-great Decree her Life to ſpare,
He will, the means, without my Crime prepare. [*Exit S. Cath.*

Por. Yet there is one way left! it is decreed
To ſave your Life, that *Maximin* ſhall bleed.
'Mid'ſt all his Guards I will his Death purſue,
Or fall a Sacrifice to Love and you.

Ber. So great a fear of Death I have not ſhown,
That I would ſhed his blood to ſave my own.
My fear is but from human frailty brought,
And never mingled with a wicked thought.

Por. 'Tis not a Crime, ſince one of you muſt die;
Or is excus'd by the neceſſity.

Ber. I cannot to a Husbands Death conſent;
But, by revealing, will your crime prevent:
The horrour of this deed———
Againſt the fear of Death has arm'd my mind;
And now leſs guilt in him than you I find:
If I a Tyrant did deteſt before,
I hate a Rebel and a Traytor more:
Ungrateful man———
Remember whoſe Succeſſor thou art made,
And then thy Benefactors Life invade.
Guards to your Charge, I give your Priſ'ner back:
And will from none but Heav'n my ſafety take.
Exit with Valerius *and Guards.*

Por. ſolus.] 'Tis true, what ſhe has often urg'd before;
He's both my Father and my Emperour:
O Honour, how can'ſt thou invent a way
To ſave my Queen, and not my truſt betray!
Unhappy I, that e'er he truſted me!
As well his Guardian-Angel may his murd'rer be.
And yet—— let Honour, Faith, and Virtue flie,
But let not Love in *Berenice* die,
She lives!———
That's put beyond diſpute as firm as Fate:
Honour and Faith let Argument debate.

Enter

Enter Maximin *and* Valerius *talking, and Guards.*

Max. 'Tis said; but I am loth to think it true, [*To Porph.*
That my late Orders were contemn'd by you:
That *Berenice* from her Guards you freed.
Por. I did it and I glory in the deed.
Max. How, glory my Commands to disobey?
Por. When those Commands would your Renown betray.
Max. Who should be judge of that Renown you name
But I?
Por. ——Yes I, and all who love your Fame,
Max. Porphyrius, your replies are insolent
Por. Sir, they are just, and for your service meant.
If, for Religion, you our lives will take;
You do not the Offenders find, but make.
All Faiths are to their own Believers just;
For none Believe, because they will, but must.
Faith is a force from which there's no defence;
Because the Reason it does first convince,
And Reason Conscience into Fetters brings;
And Conscience is without the pow'r of Kings.
Max. Then Conscience is a greater Prince than I:
At whose each erring call a King may die.
Who Conscience leaves to its own free Command,
Puts the worst Weapon in the Rebel's hand.
Por. Its Empire, therefore, Sir, should bounded be;
And but in Acts of its Religion free:
Those who ask Civil Pow'r and Conscience too,
Their Monarch to his own Destruction woo.
With needful Arms let him rescue his Peace;
Then, that wild Beast be safely my release.
Max. I can forgive these liberties you take,
While but my Counsellour your self you make:
But you first act your Sense and then advise:
That is, at my expence you will be wise.
My Wife, I for Religion do not kill;
But she shall die——because it is my Will.
Por. Sir, I acknowledge I too much have done;
And therefore merit not to be your Son:
I render back the Honours which you gave;
My Liberty's the only gift I crave.
Max. You take too much: ——but e'er you lay it down.
Consider what you part with in a Crown:
Monarchs of Cares in Policy complain,
Because they would be pity'd while they Reign;

For ſtill the greater troubles they confeſs,
They know their pleaſures will be envy'd leſs.
Por. Thoſe joys I neither envy nor admire;
But beg I from the troubles may retire.
Max. What Soul is this which Empire cannot ſtir!
Supine and tame as a Philoſopher!
Know then, that thou were adopted to a Throne,
Not for thy ſake ſo much as for my own.
My thoughts were once about thy Death at ſtrife;
And thy Succeſſion's thy Reprieve for Life.
Por. My Life and Death are ſtill within thy pow'r:
But your Succeſſion I renounce this hour.
Upon a Bloody Throne I will not ſit;
Nor ſhare the guilt of Crimes which you commit.
Max. If you are not my *Cæſar*, you muſt die.
Por. I take it as a nobler Deſtiny.
Max. I pity thee and would thy faults forgive:
But thus preſuming on, thou canſt not live.
Por. Sir, with your Throne your pity I reſtore;
I am your Foe; nor will I uſe it more.
Now all my Debts of Gratitude are paid,
I cannot truſted be, nor you betray'd. [*Is going.*
Max. Stay, ſtay! in threatning me to be my Foe,
You give me warning to conclude you ſo.
Thou to ſucceed a Monarch in his Seat!

Enter Placidius.

No, Fool, thou art too honeſt to be Great!
Placidius, on your Life this Pris'ner keep:
Our enmity ſhall end before I ſleep.
Placid. I ſtill am ready, Sir, whene'r you pleaſe. [*To* Porph.
To do you ſuch ſmall ſervices as theſe.
Max. The ſight with which my eyes ſhall firſt be fed,
Muſt be my Empreſs, and this Traytor's Head.
Por. Where e'r thou ſtand'ſt, I'll level at that place
My guſhing Blood, and ſpout it at thy face.
Thus, not by Marriage, we our Blood will joyn:
Nay, more, my Arms ſhall throw my Head at thine.
Max. There: go Adoption:——I have now decreed,
That *Maximin* ſhall *Maximin* ſucceed:
Old as I am in pleaſures I will try
To waſt an Empire yet before I die:
Since Life is fugitive, and will not ſtay,
I'll make it fly more pleaſantly away. [*Exit.*

ACT.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Valeria, Placidius.

Val. IF, as you ſay, you ſilently have been
So long my Lover, let my pow'r be ſeen:
One hours diſcourſe before *Porphyrius* die,
Is all I ask, and you too may be by.
Placid. I muſt not break
The Order, which the Emperour did ſign.
Val. Has then his hand more pow'r with you than mine?
Placid. This hand if given, would far more pow'rful be,
Than all the Monarchs of the World to me:
But 'tis a Bait which would my heart betray;
And, when I'm faſt, will ſoon be ſnatch'd away.
Val. O ſay not ſo, for I ſhall ever be
Oblig'd to him who once obliges me.
Placid. Madam, I'll wink, and favour your deceit:
But know, fair Coz'ner, that I know the Cheat:
Though to theſe eyes I nothing can refuſe,
I'll not the merit of my ruine loſe:
It is enough I ſee the hook, and bite:
But firſt I'll pay my Death with my delight. [*Kiſſes her hand, and Exit.*
Val. What can I hope from this ſad interview!
And yet my brave deſign I will purſue.
By many ſigns I have my Rival found:
But fortune him as deep as me does wound.
For, if he loves the Empreſs, his ſad Fate
More moves my pity, than his ſcorn my hate.
To her Placidius *with* Porphyrius.
Placid. I am, perhaps, the firſt
Who forc'd by Fate, and in his own deſpite,
Brought a lov'd Rival to his Miſtriſs ſight.
Val. But, in revenge, let this your comfort be,
That you have brought a man who loves not me.
However, lay your cauſeleſs envy by;
He is a Rival who muſt quickly die.
Por. And yet I could with leſs concernment bear
That death of which you ſpeak, than ſee you here.
So much of guilt in my refuſal lies,
That Debtor-like, I dare not meet your eyes.

Val. I do not blame you if you love elſe-where:
And, would to Heav'n, I could your ſuffrings bear;
Or once again could ſome new way invent
To take upon my ſelf your puniſhment:
I ſent for you, to let you know that ſtill
(Though now I want the pow'r) I have the will.
Placid. Can all this Ocean of your kindneſs be
Pour'd upon him, and not one drop on me?
Val. 'Tis pour'd; but falls from this ungrateful man,
Like drops of water from a riſing Swan.
Upon his Breaſt no ſign of wet remains;
He bears his Love more proudly than his Chains.
Por. This thankleſs man his death will ſoon remove,
And quickly end ſo undeſerv'd a Love.
Val. Unthankful as you are, I know not why,
But ſtill I love too well to ſee you die.
Placidius, can you love, and ſee my grief,
And for my ſake not offer ſome relief?
Placid. Not all the Gods his ruine ſhall prevent;
Your kindneſs does but urge his puniſhment.
Beſides, what can I for his ſafety do?
He has declar'd himſelf your Fathers Foe.
Val. Give out he is eſcap'd, and ſet him free:
And, if you pleaſe, lay all the fault on me.
Por. O do not on thoſe terms my freedom name:
Freed by your danger I ſhould die with ſhame.
Placid. I muſt not farther by your Prayers be won: [*To her.*
All I could do I have already done.
Val. To bring *Porphyrius* only to my ſight,
Was not to ſhow your pity, but your ſpight:
Would you but half oblige her you adore?
You ſhould not have done this, or ſhould do more.
Placid. Alas, what hope can there be left for me,
When I muſt ſink into the mine I ſee?
My heart will fall before you, if I ſtay;
Each word you ſpeak ſaps part of it away——
——Yet all my Fortune on his Death is ſet:
And he may love her, though he loves not yet.
He muſt——and yet ſhe ſays he muſt not die:
O, if I could but wink, I could deny.
To them Albinus.
Alb. The Emperour expects your Priſoner ſtrait:
And, with impatience, for his death does wait.
Placid. Nay, then it is too late my love to weigh. [*Exit Alb.*
Your Pardon, Madam, if I muſt obey.

Por.

Por. I am prepar'd, he shall not long attend.
Val. Then here my Pray'rs, and my submissions end.
Placidius know, that hour in which he dies,
My death (so well I love) shall wait on his.
Placid. O, Madam, do not fright me with your Death!
Val. My Life depends alone upon his Breath.
But, if I live in him, you do not know
How far my gratitude to you may go.
I do not promise——but it so may prove,
That gratitude, in time, may turn to Love.
Try me——
Placid. —— Now I consider it, I will: [*Musing a little.*
'Tis in your pow'r to save him or to kill.
I'll run the hazard to preserve his Life,
If, after that, you vow to be my Wife.
Val. Nay, good *Placidius*, now you are too hard.
Would you do nothing but for meer reward?
Like Usurers to men in want you prove,
When you would take Extortion for my Love.
Placid. You have concluded then that he must die. [*Going with* (Porph.
Val. O stay, if no price else his Life can buy
My Love a ransom for his Life I give: [*Holding her Handkerchief before her Face.*
Let my *Porphyrius* for another live.
Por. You too much value the small Merchandize:
My Life's o'er rated, when your Love's the price.

Enter Albinus.

Alb. I long have list'ned to your generous strife,
As much concern'd for brave *Porphyrius* Life.
For mine I to his favour ow'd this day;
Which with my future service I will pay.
Placid. Lest any your intended flight prevent,
I'll lead you first the back way to my Tent:
Thence, in disguise, you may the City gain,
While some excuse for your escape I feign.
Val. Farewel, I must not see you when you part: *Turning her* (*Face away.*
For that last look would break my tender heart.
Yet ——let it break—I must have one look more; [*Looking on him.*
Nay, now I'm less contented than before,
For that last look draws on another too:
Which sure I need not to remember you.
For ever——yet I must once glance repeat;
But quick and short as starving people eat.
So much humanity dwells in your breast,
Sometimes to think on her who loves you best.

[*Going, he takes her Hand and kisses it.*

Por.

Por. My wandring ſteps where ever Fortune bear,
Your memory I in my breaſt will wear.
Which, as a precious amulet I ſtill
Will carry, my defence and guard from ill.
Though to my former vows I muſt be true,
I'll ever keep one Love entire for you.
That Love which Brothers with chaſte Siſters make:
And by this Holy Kiſs which now I take
From your fair hand——
This common Sun which abſent, both ſhall ſee,
Shall ne'r behold a breach of Faith in me.

Val. Go, go, my Death will your ſhort vows reſtore:
You've ſaid enough, and I can hear no more.

[*Exit* Valeria *one way, and* Porph. *and* Alb. *another.*

Placid. Love and good Nature, how do you betray!
Miſleading thoſe who ſee and know their way!
I, whom deep Arts of State could ne'er beguile,
Have ſold my ſelf to ruine for a ſmile.
Nay, I am driven ſo low, that I muſt take
That ſmile, as Alms, giv'n for my Rival's ſake.

Enter Maximin *talking with* Valerius.

Max. And why was I not told of this before?

Val. Sir, ſhe this Evening landed on the ſhore.
For with her Daughter being Priſ'ner made,
She in another Veſſel was convey'd.

Max. Bring hither the Ægyptian Princeſs ſtrait. [*To* Placid.
And you, *Valerius* on her Mother wait. [*Exit* Valerius.

Placid. The Mother of th' Ægyptian Princeſs here!

Max. *Porphyrius*'s Death I will a while defer;
And this new opportunity improve
To make my laſt effort upon her Love—— [*Exit* Placid.
Thoſe who have youth may long endure to court;
But he muſt quickly catch whoſe Race is ſhort.
I in my Autumn do my Siege begin;
And muſt make haſt ere Winter comes, to win.
This hour —— no longer ſhall my pains endure:
Her Love ſhall eaſe me, or her Death ſhall cure.

Enter at one Door Felicia *and* Valerius, *at the other* S. Catherine *and* Placidius.

S. Cath. O, my dear Mother?

Fel. ——With what joy I ſee
My deareſt Daughter from the Tempeſt free.

S. Cath. Dearer then all the joys vain Empire yields,
Or than to youthful Monarchs conquer'd Fields
Before you came——my Soul

All

All fill'd with Heav'n did Earthly Joys diſdain,
But you pull back ſome part of me again.
Placid. You ſee, Sir, ſhe can own a joy below.
Max. It much imports me that this truth I know.
Fel. How dreadful Death does on the Waves appear!
Where Seas we only ſee, and Tempeſts ſhear,
Such frightful Images did then purſue
My trembling Soul, that ſcarce I thought of you.
Placid. All circumſtances to your wiſh combine:
Her fear of Death advances your deſign.
Fel. But to that only pow'r we ſerve I pray'd,
Till he, who bid it riſe, the Tempeſt laid.
Max. You are a Chriſtian then! [*To Felicia.*
For Death this very hour you muſt prepare:
I have decreed no Chriſtian's Life to ſpare.
Fel. For Death! I hope you but my Courage try:
What ever I believe, I dare not die,
Heav'n does not, ſure, that Seal of Faith require;
Or, if he did, would firmer thoughts inſpire.
A Womans Witneſs can no credit give
To Truths Divine, and therefore I would live.
Max. I cannot give the life which you demand:
But that and mine are in your Daughter's hand:
Ask her, if ſhe will yet her Love deny;
And bid a Monarch and her Mother die.
Fel. Now, mighty Prince, you cancel all my Fear:
My Life is ſafe when it depends on her.
How can you let me languiſh thus in pain! [*To S. Cath.*
Make haſt to cure thoſe doubts which yet remain.
Speak quickly, ſpeak, and eaſe me of my fear.
S. Cath. Alas, I doubt it is not you I hear.
Some wicked Fiend aſſumes your Voice and Face,
To make frail Nature Triumph over Grace.
It cannot be——
That ſhe who taught my Childhood Piety,
Should bid my riper Age my Faith deny:
That ſhe who bid my hopes this Crown purſue,
Should ſnatch it from me when 'tis juſt in view.
Fel. Peace, peace; too much my Age's ſhame you ſhow:
How eaſie 'tis to teach! how hard to do!
My lab'ring thoughts are with themſelves at ſtriſe:
I dare not die, nor bid you ſave my Life.
Max. You muſt do one and that without delay;
Too long already for your Death I ſtay;

I cannot with your ſmall concerns diſpence;
For Death's of more importance call me hence.
Prepare to execute your office ſtrait. [*To his Guards.*
Fel. O ſtay, and let 'em but one minute wait.
Such quick Commands for Death you would not give,
If you but knew how ſweet it were to live.
Max. Then bid her love.
Fel. ——Is duty grown ſo weak, [*To* S. Cath.
That Love's a harder word then Death to ſpeak?
S. Cath. Oh!
Fel. Miſtake me not, I never can approve [*Privately to* S. Cath.
A thing ſo wicked as the Tyrant's Love.
I ask you would but ſome promiſe give,
Only to gain me ſo much time to live.
S. Cath. That promiſe is a ſtep to greater ſin:
The hold once loſt, we ſeldom take agen.
Each bound to Heav'n we ſainter Eſſays make;
Still loſing ſomewhat till we quite go back.
Max. Away, I grant no longer a Reprieve
Fel. O do but beg my life, and I may live. [*To* S. Cath.
Have you not ſo much pity in your Breaſt?
He ſtays to have you make it your requeſt.
S. Cath. To beg your life——
Is not to ask a grace of *Maximin*:
It is a ſilent bargain for a Sin.
Could we live always, Life were worth our coſt;
But now we keep with care what muſt be loſt.
Here we ſtand ſhiv'ring on the Bank, and cry,
When we ſhould plunge into Eternity.
One moment ends our pain;
And yet the ſhock of Death we dare not ſtand,
By thought ſcarce meaſur'd, and too ſwift for ſand:
'Tis but becauſe the living death n'er knew,
They fear to prove it as a thing that's new.
Let me th' Experiment before you try,
I'll ſhow you firſt how eaſie 'tis to die.
Max. Draw then that Curtain, and let Death appear,
And let both ſee how eaſie 'twill be there.
The Scene opens, and ſhews the Wheel.
Fel. Alas, what torment I already feel!
Max. Go, bind her Hand and Foot beneath that Wheel:
Four of you turn that dreadful Engine round;
Four others hold her faſt'ned to the ground:
That by degrees her tender Breaſts may feel,
Firſt the rough razings of the pointed ſteel:

Her

Her Paps then let the bearded Tenters ſtake,
And on each Hook a gory Gobbet take.
Till th'upper fleſh by piece-meal torn away,
Her beating Heart ſhall to the Sun diſplay.
Fel. My deareſt Daughter at your Feet I fall; [*Kneeling.*
Hear, O yet hear your wretched Mother's call.
Think, at your Birth, Ah think what pains I bore,
And can your Eyes behold me ſuffer more?
You were the Child which from your Infancy
I ſtill lov'd beſt, and then you beſt lov'd me.
About my Neck your little Arms you ſpred,
Nor could you ſleep without me in the Bed;
But ſought my Boſom when you went to reſt,
And all night long would lie acroſs my breſt.
Nor without cauſe did you that fondneſs ſhow:
You may remember when our *Nile* did flow;
While on the Bank you innocently ſtood,
And with a Wand made Circles in the Flood,
That roſe, and juſt was hurrying you to Death,
When I, from far, all pale, and out of breath,
Ran and ruſh'd in——
And from the Waves my floating pledge did bear;
So much my Love was ſtronger than my Fear.
But you——
Max. Woman, for theſe long Tales your Life's too ſhort;
Go, bind her quickly, and begin the ſport.
Fel. No, in her Arms my Sanctuary's plac'd: [*Running to her Daughter.*
Thus I will cling for ever to her waſte.
Max. What, muſt my Will by Women be controll'd?
Haſte, draw your Weapons, and cut off her hold.
S. Cath. Thus my laſt duty to you let me pay: [*Kiſſing her Mother.*
Yet, Tyrant, I to thee will never pray.
Though her's to ſave I my own Life would give,
Yet by my ſin, my Mother ſhall not live.
To thy foul Luſt I never can conſent;
Why doſt thou then defer my puniſhment?
I ſcorn thoſe Gods thou vainly doſt adore:
Contemn thy Empire, but thy Bed abhor.
If thou wouldſt yet a bloodier Tyrant be,
I will inſtruct thy rage, begin with me.
Max. I thank thee that thou doſt my anger move:
It is a Tempeſt that will wreck my Love.
I'll pull thee hence, cloſe hidden as thou art,
[*Claps his hand to his Breaſt.*
And ſtand with my drawn Sword before my Heart.

Yes, you ſhall be obey'd, though I am loth,
Go, and while I can bid you, bind 'em both.
Go, bind 'em ere my fit of Love return:
Fire ſhall quench Fire, and Anger Love ſhall burn.
Thus I prevent thoſe Follies I ſhould do;
And 'tis the nobler Fever of the two.

Fel. Torn piece by piece, alas, what horrid pains!

S. Cath. Heav'n is all Mercy, who that Death ordains.
And that which Heav'n thinks beſt is ſurely ſo:
But bare and naked, ſhame to undergo,
'Tis ſomewhat more than Death:
Expos'd to lawleſs Eyes I dare not be,
My modeſty is ſacred, Heav'n, to thee:
Let not my Body be the Tyrant's Spoil;
Nor hands, nor eyes thy purity defile.

Amariel deſcends ſwiftly with a flaming Sword, and ſtrikes at the Wheel, which breaks in pieces; then he aſcends again.

Max. Is this th' effect of all your boaſted skill?
Theſe brittle Toys to execute my Will;
A Puppet-ſhow of Death I only find,
Where I a ſtrong and ſinew pain deſign'd.
By what weak Infant was this Engine wrought?

Val. From *Bilbilis* the temper'd Steel was brought:
Metal more tough the Anvil ne'er did beat,
Nor from the Forge did hiſſing Waters heat.

Placid. I ſaw a Youth deſcend all Heav'nly fair,
Who in his hand a flaming Sword did bear,
And, Whirlwind-like, around him drove the Air.
At his rais'd Arm the rigid Iron ſhook;
And, bending backwards, fled before the ſtroke.

Max. What! Miracles, the tricks of Heav'n to me?
I'll try if ſhe be wholly Iron-free.
If not by Sword, then ſhe ſhall dye by Fire;
And, one by one, her Miracles I'll tire.
If proof againſt all kind of Deaths ſhe be,
My Love's immortal, and ſhe's fit for me.

S. Cath. No, Heav'n has ſhown its pow'r, and now thinks fit
Thee to thy former fury to remit.
Had Providence my longer life decreed,
Thou from thy paſſion hadſt not yet been freed.
But Heav'n, which ſuffer'd that, my Faith to prove,
Now to it ſelf does vindicate my Love.
A pow'r controlls thee which thou doſt not ſee;
And that's a Miracle it works in thee.

Max. The truth of this new Miracle we'll try;
To prove it, you must take the pains to dye.
Bring me their Heads———

Fel. That mercy, Tyrant, thou deny'st to me,
At thy last breath may Heav'n refuse to thee.
My fears are going, and I Death can view:
I see, I see, him there thy steps pursue.
And with a lifted Arm, and silent Pace,
Stalk after thee, just aiming in his Chase.

S. Cath. No more, dear Mother, ill in Death it shows
Your Peace of Mind by rage to discompose:
No streak of Blood (the Reliques of the Earth)
Shall stain my Soul in her Immortal Birth;
But she shall mount all pure, a white, and Virgin mind;
And full of all that Peace which there she goes to find.

Exeunt S. Catharine *and* Felicia, *with* Valerius *and Guards. The Scene shuts.*

Max. She's gone, and pull'd my heart-strings as she went.
Were penitence no shame, I cou'd repent.
Yet 'tis of bad Example she should live;
For I might get th'ill habit to forgive.
Thou soft Seducer of my heart, away———
Who lingring would about its Confines stay,
To watch when some Rebellion would begin;
And ready at each sigh to enter in.
In vain; for thou
Dost on the outside of the Body play,
And, when drawn neareſt, shalt be whirl'd away.
What ails me, that I cannot lose thy thought?
Command the Empress hither to be brought; [*To* Placidius.
I in her Death shall some diversion find,
And rid my thoughts at once of Woman-kind.

Placid. *aside.*] 'Tis well he thinks not of *Porphyrius* yet. [*Exit.*

Max. How hard it is this beauty to forget!
My stormy Rage has only shook my Will:
She crept down lower, but she sticks there still.
Fool that I am to struggle thus with Love!
Why should I that which pleases me remove?
True, she should dye, were she concern'd alone;
But I love, not for her sake, but my own.
Our Gods are Gods 'cause they have pow'r and will;
Who can do all things, can do nothing ill.
Ill is Rebellion 'gainst some higher pow'r:
The World may sin, but not its Emperour.

My Empreſs then ſhall die, my Princeſs live;
If this be ſin, I do my ſelf forgive.

[*To him* Valerius.

Val. Your will's obey'd; for, mighty Emperor,
The Princeſs and her Mother are no more.

Max. She is not dead!

Val. —— Great Sir, your will was ſo.

Max. That was my will of half an hour ago.
But now 'tis alter'd; I have chang'd her Fate,
She ſhall not die.

Val. ——— Your pity comes too late.
Betwixt her Guards ſhe ſeem'd by Bride-men led,
Her cheeks with cheerful bluſhes were o'r-ſpread,
When, ſmiling, to the Ax ſhe bow'd her head.
Juſt at the ſtroke——
Ætherial Muſick did her death prepare;
Like joyful ſounds of Spouſals in the air.
A radiant light did her crown'd Temples gild,
And all the place with fragrant ſcents was fill'd.
The Balmy miſt came thick'ning to the ground,
And Sacred ſilence cover'd all around,
But when (its work perform'd) the Cloud withdrew,
And day reſtor'd us to each others view,
I ſought her Head to bring it on my Spear;
In vain I ſought it, for it was not there.
No part remain'd; but from afar our ſight
Diſcover'd in the Air long tracts of light,
Of charming Notes we heard the laſt rebounds,
And Muſick dying in remoter ſounds.

Max. And doſt thou think
This lame account fit for a Love-ſick King?
Go—from the other World a better bring.

[*Kills him, then ſets his foot on him, and ſpeaks.*

When in my breaſt two mighty paſſions ſtrove,
Thou had'ſt err'd better in obeying Love.
'Tis true, that way thy death had follow'd too,
But I had then been leſs diſpleas'd than now.
Now I muſt live unquiet for thy ſake;
And this poor recompence is all I take. [*Spurns the body.*

Here the Scene opens, and diſcovers Berenice *on a Scaffold, the Guards by her, and amongſt them* Porphyrius *and* Albinus, *like Moors, as all the Guards are.* Placidius *enters, and whiſpers the Emperour whilſt* Porphyrius *ſpeaks.*

Por. From *Berenice* I cannot go away;
But, like a Ghoſt, muſt near my Treaſure ſtay.

Alb.

Alb. Night and this ſhape ſecure us from their Eyes.
Por. Have courage then for our bold Enterpriſe.
Duty and Faith no tie on me can have,
Since I renounc'd thoſe Honours which he gave.
Max. The time is come we did ſo long attend, [*To Ber.*
Which muſt theſe diſcords of our Marriage end.
Yet, *Berenice*, remember you have been
An Empreſs, and the Wife of *Maximin.*
Ber. I well remember I have been your Wife;
And therefore, dying, beg from Heav'n your Life.
Be all the Diſcords of our Bed forgot,
Which, Virtue witneſs, I did never ſpot.
What errors I have made, though while I live
You cannot pardon, to the Dead forgive.
Max. How much ſhe is to Piety inclin'd!
Behead her while ſhe's in ſo good a mind.
Por. Stand firm, *Albinus*, now the time is come
To free the Empreſs.
Alb. ——And deliver *Rome.*
Por. Within I feel my hot Blood ſwell my heart,
And generous tremblings in each outward part,
'Tis done—— Tyrant, this is thy lateſt hour.
Porphyrius *and* Albinus *draw, and are making at the Emperor.*
Ber. Look to your ſelf, my Lord the Emperor:
Treaſon, help, help, my Lord!
Maximin *turns and defends himſelf, the Guards ſet on* Porphyrius *and* Albinus.
Max. Diſarm 'em, but their Lives I charge you ſpare.
[*After they are diſarm'd.*
Unmask 'em, and diſcover who they are.
Good Gods! Is it *Porphyrius* whom I ſee?
Placid. I wonder how he gain'd his Liberty.
Max. Traytor!
Por. —— Know, Tyrant, I can hear that Name
Rather than Son, and bear it with leſs ſhame.
Traytor's a Name, which, were my Arm yet free,
The Roman Senate would beſtow on thee.
To Ber. Ah, Madam, you have ruin'd my deſign,
And loſt your Life; for I regard not mine.
Too ill a Miſtriſs, and too good a Wife.
Ber. It was my Duty to preſerve his life.
Max. Now I perceive [*To Porphyrius.*
In what cloſe Walk your mind ſo long did move:
You ſcorn'd my Throne, aſpiring to her Love.

Ber.

Ber. In Death I'll own a Love to him ſo pure,
As will the Teſt of Heav'n it ſelf endure.
A Love ſo chaſte, as Conſcience could not chide;
But cheriſh it, and kept it by its ſide.
A Love which never knew a hot deſire,
But flam'd as harmleſs as a lambent Fire.
A Love which pure from Soul to Soul might paſs,
As Light tranſmitted through a Chryſtal Glaſs.
Which gave *Porphyrius* all without a ſin;
Yet kept entire the Right of *Maximin*.

Max. The beſt return that I to both can make,
Shall be to ſuffer for each others ſake.

Por. Barbarian, do not dare her blood to ſhed,
Who from my vengeance ſav'd thy curſed Head,
A flight no Honour ever reach'd before;
And which ſucceeding Ages will adore.

Ber. Porphyrius, I muſt die!
That common debt to Nature paid muſt be;
But I have left a Debt unpaid to thee.
To *Maximin*——
I have perform'd the Duty of a Wife;
But, ſaving his, I caſt away thy Life.
Ah, what ill Stars upon our Loves did ſhine,
That I am more thy Murd'rer than he mine.

Max. Make haſte.

Por. So haſty none in Execution are,
But they allow the dying time for Pray'r.
Farewel, ſweet Saint, my Prayer ſhall be to you:
My love has been unhappy, but 'twas true,
Remember me! Alas, what have I ſed?
You muſt die too!
But yet remember me when you are dead.

Ber. If I die firſt, I will——
Stop ſhort of Heav'n, and wait you in a Cloud;
For fear we loſe each other in the crowd.

Por. Love is the only Coin in Heav'n will go,
Then take all with you, and leave none below.

Ber. 'Tis want of knowledge, not of Love, I fear,
Leſt we miſtake when Bodies are not there,
O as a mark that I could wear a Scroul,
With this Inſcription, *Berenice*'s Soul.

Por. That needs not, ſure, for none will be ſo bright,
So pure, or with ſo ſmall allays of light.

Max. From my full Eyes fond Tears begin to ſtart;
Diſpatch, they practiſe Treaſon on my Heart.

Por. Adieu, this Farewel ſigh, I as my laſt bequeath;
Catch it, 'tis Love expiring in a breath.
Ber. This ſigh of mine ſhall meet it half the way,
As pledges given that each for other ſtay.
Enter Valeria *and* Cydon.
Val. What diſmal Scene of Death is here prepar'd!
Max. Now ſtrike.
Val. They ſhall not ſtrike till I am heard.
Max. From whence does this new impudence proceed,
That you dare alter that which I decreed?
Val. Ah, Sir, to what ſtrange courſes do you fly,
To make your ſelf abhorr'd for Cruelty?
The Empire groans under your bloody Reign,
And its vaſt Body bleeds in every Vein.
Gaſping and pale, and fearing more, it lies;
And now you ſtab it in the very Eyes:
Your *Cæſar* and the Part'ner of your Bed;
Ah who can wiſh to live when they are dead?
If ever gentle pity touch'd your Breaſt——
——I cannot ſpeak——my Tears ſhall ſpeak the reſt.
[*Weeping and ſobbing.*
Por. She adds new grief to what I felt before,
And Fate has now no room to put in more.
Max. Away, thou ſhame and ſlander of my blood. [*To Val.*
Who taught thee to be pitiful or good?
Val. What hope have I
The name of Virtue ſhould prevail with him,
Who thinks ev'n it, for which I plead, a Crime?
Yet Nature, ſure, ſome Argument may be;
If them you cannot pity, pity me.
Max. I will, and all the World ſhall judge it ſo:
I will th'exceſs of pity to you ſhow.
You ask to ſave
A dangerous Rebel, and diſloyal Wife,
And I in mercy——will not take your Life.
Val. You more than kill me by this Cruelty,
And in their perſons bid your Daughter dye.
I honour *Berenice*'s Virtue much;
But for *Porphyrius* my love is ſuch,
I cannot, will not live when he is gone.
Max. I'll do that Cure for you which on my ſelf is done.
You muſt, like me, your Lover's Life remove;
Cut off your hope, and you deſtroy your Love,
If it were hard, I would not bid you try
The Med'cine: but 'tis but to let him dye.

Yet

Yet ſince you are ſo ſoft, (which you call good)
And are not yet confirm'd enough in blood
To ſee his Death;
Your frailty ſhall be favour'd with this grace,
That they ſhall ſuffer in another place.
If after they are dead, their memory,
By any chance into your mind be brought,
Laugh, and divert it with ſome other thought.
Away with 'em.

[*Exeunt* Berenice, Porphyrius, Albinus, *carried off by Guards.*

Val. Since Pray'rs nor Tears can bend his cruel mind, [*Looking after* Porph.
Farewel, the beſt and braveſt of Mankind;
How I have lov'd Heav'n knows; but there's a Fate,
Which hinders me from being fortunate.
My Father's crimes hang heavy on my head,
And like a gloomy Cloud about me ſpread;
I would in vain be pious, that's a grace
Which Heav'n permits not to a Tyrant's Race.

Max. Hence to her Tent the fooliſh Girl convey.

Val. Let me be juſt before I go away:
Placidius, I have vow'd to be your Wife;
Take then my hand, 'tis yours while I have Life.
One moment here, I muſt anothers be:
But this *Porphyrius* gives me back to thee.

[*Stabs her ſelf twice, and then* Placidius *wreſts the Dagger from her.*

Placid. Help, help the Princeſs, help!

Max. What rage has urg'd this act which thou haſt done?

Val. Thou, Tyrant, and thy Crimes have pull'd it on.
Thou who canſt Death with ſuch a pleaſure ſee,
Now take thy fill, and glut thy ſight in me.
But——— I'll the occaſion of my Death forget;
Save him I love, and be my Father yet:
I can no more——*Porphyrius*, my dear———

Cyd. Alas, ſhe raves, and thinks *Porphyrius* here.

Val. Have I not yet deſerv'd thee now I die?
Is *Berenice* ſtill more fair than I?
Porphyrius, do not ſwim before my ſight;
Stand ſtill, and let me, let me aim aright.
Stand ſtill but while thy poor *Valeria* dies,
And ſighs her Soul into her Lovers Eyes. [*Dies.*

Placid. She's gone from Earth, and with her went away
All of the Tyrant that deſerv'd to ſtay:
I've loſt in her all joys that life can give;
And only to revenge her death would live——— [*Aſide.*

Cyd.

Cyd. The Gods have clam'd her, and we muſt reſign.

Max. What had the Gods to do with me or mine?
Did I moleſt your Heav'n?
Why ſhould you then make *Maximin* your Foe,
Who paid you tribute which he need not do?
Your Altars I with ſmoak of Gumms did crown:
For which you lean'd your hungry Noſtrils down:
All daily gaping for my incenſe there,
More than your Sun could draw you in a Year.
And you for this theſe Plagues on me have ſent;
But by the Gods (by *Maximin* I meant)
Henceforth I and my World
Hoſtility with you and yours declare:
Look to it, Gods, for you th' Aggreſſors are.
Keep you your Rain and Sun ſhine in your Skies,
And I'll keep back my Flame and Sacrifice.
Your Trade of Heav'n ſhall ſoon be at a ſtand,
And all your Goods lye dead upon your hand.

Placid. Thus, Tyrant, ſince the Gods th'Aggreſſors are, [*Stabbing*
Thus by this ſtroke they have begun the War. (*him.*

Maximin *Struggels with him, and gets the dagger from him.*

Max. Thus I return the Strokes which they have giv'n; [*Stabbing*
Thus, Traytor, thus; and thus I would to Heav'n. (Placid.

Placidius *falls, and the Emperour ſtaggers after him, and ſits down upon him; the Guards come to help the Emperour.*

Max. Stand off, and let me, ere my ſtrength be gone,
Take my laſt pleaſure of revenge, alone.

Enter a Centurion.

Cen. Arm, Arm, the Camp is in a mutiny:
For Room and Liberty the Souldiers cry.
Porphyrius mov'd their pity as he went,
To reſcue *Berenice* from puniſhment.
And now he heads their new attempted crime.

Max. Now I am down, the Gods have watch'd their time.
You think——
To ſave your Credit, feeble Deities;
But I will give my ſelf the Strength to riſe.

He ſtrives to get up, and being up, ſtaggers.

It wonnot be——
My Body has not pow'r my mind to bear.
I muſt return again— and conquer here. [*Sits down upon the Body.*
My coward Body does my Will controul;
Farwel thou baſe deſerter of my Soul.

I'll ſhake this Carcaſs off, and be obey'd;
Reign an Imperial Ghoſt without its aid.
Go, Souldiers, take my Enſigns with you, fight,
And vanquiſh Rebels in your Sovereign's Right:
Before I die———
Bring me *Porphyrius* and my Empreſs dead:
I would brave Heav'n, in my each hand a Head.
Placid. Do not regard a dying Tyrants Breath, [*To the Souldiers.*
He can but look revenge on you in Death.
Max. Vanquiſh'd, and dar'ſt thou yet a Rebel be?
Thus—I can more than look revenge on thee. [*Stabs him again.*
Placid. Oh, I am gone! [*Dies.*
Max. ———And after thee I go,
Revenging ſtill, and following ev'n to the other World my Blow.
[*Stabs him again.*
And ſhoving back this Earth on which I ſit,
I'll mount——and ſcatter all the Gods I hit. [*Dies.*

Enter Porphyrius, Berenice, Albinus, *Souldiers*, Porphyrius *looks on the Bodys entring, and ſpeaks*

Por. 'Tis done before, (this mighty work of Fate!)
And I am glad our Swords are come too late.
He was my Prince, and though a Bloody one,
I ſhould have conquer'd, and have mercy ſhown.
Sheath all your Swords, and ceaſe your enmity;
They are not Foes, but *Romans* whom you ſee.
Ber. He was my Tyrant, but my Husband too;
And therefore Duty will ſome tears allow.
Por. Placidius here!
And fair *Valeria* new depriv'd of Breath?
Who can unriddle this Dumb ſhow of Death?
Cyd. When, Sir, her Father did your Life deny,
She kill'd her ſelf that ſhe with you might die.
Placidius made the Emperor's Death his crime;
Who, dying, did revenge his Death on him.
[Porphyrius *kneels, and takes* Valeria's *hand*
Por. For thy dear ſake, I vow each Week I live,
One Day to faſting and juſt grief I'll give:
And what hard Fate did to thy Life deny,
My Gratitude ſhall pay thy memory.
Cent. Mean time to you belongs the Imperial pow'r:
We with one voice ſalute you Emperour.
Souldiers. Long live *Porphyrius* Emperour of the *Romans*.
Por. Too much, my Country-men, your love you ſhow
That you have thought me worthy to be ſo.
But, to requite that Love, I muſt take care
Not to engage you in a Civil War.

Two

Two Emperors at *Rome* the Senate chose,
And whom they chuse no *Roman* should oppose.
In Peace or War let Maurelia hope or fear,
All my Ambition shall be bounded here. [*Kissing* Berenice's *hand.*

Ber. I have too lately been a Prince's Wife,
And fear th' unlucky Omen of the Life.
Like a rich Vessel beat by Storms to Shore,
'Twere madness should I venture out once more.
Of glorious trouble I will take no part,
And in no Empire reign, but of your heart.

Ror. Let to the Winde your Golden Eagles fly, [*To the Soldiers.*
Your Trumpets sound a bloodless Victory:
Our Arms no more let *Aquileia* fear,
But to her Gates our peaceful Ensigns bear.
While I mix Cypress with my Myrtle Wreath,
Joy for your Life, and mourn *Valeria*'s Death. [*Exeunt omnes.*

FINIS.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. *Ellen*, when she was to be carried off dead by the Bearers.

To the Bearer. *Hold, are you mad, you damn'd confounded Dog,*
I am to rise and speak the Epilogue.

To the Audience. *I come, kind Gentlemen, strange News to tell ye,*
I am the Ghost of poor departed Nelly.
Sweet Ladies, be not frighted, I'll be civil,
I'm what I was, a little harmless Devil.
For after Death, we Sprights have just such nature,
We had, for all the World, when human Creatures;
And therefore I, that was an Actress here,
Play all my tricks in Hell, a Goblin there.
Gallant's look to't, you say there are no Sprights;
But I'll come dance about your Beds at Nights.
And 'faith you'll be in a sweet kind of taking,
When I surprize you between sleep and waking.
To tell you true, I walk because I die
Out of my calling in a Tragedy.
O Poet, damn'd dull Poet, who could prove
So senseless to make Nelly *die for Love:*
Nay, what's yet worse, to kill me in the prime
Of Easter-Term, in Tart and Cheesecake-time!
I'll fit the Fop, for I'll not one word say
T' excuse his godly, out of fashion, Play.
A Play, which if you dare but twice sit out,
You'll all be slander'd, and be thought devout.
But farewel, Gentlemen, make hast to me,
I'm sure e'r long to have your company.
As for my Epitaph when I am gone,
I'll trust no Poet, but will write my own.

Here Nelly lies, who, though she liv'd a Slater'n,
Yet di'd a Princess acting in St. *Cathar'n.*